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Researches on the Circulation of the Peshitta in the Middle of the Fifth Century

by

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Preface

Formerly, while working at the University of Tartu, in Estonia, I had a different plan with this study. I had the intention of publishing the fruits of my long years of textual researches in an extensive work which was to contain the whole history of the text of the New Testament on Syriac ground. But now everything has taken a different turn. I have lost my home and my fellow-countrymen, as well as part of the scientific material I had collected during long years and my special library; our University has also been deprived of its professors who are dispersed all over the world.

This entirely new situation constrained me to alter the projects which had developed during the time of my research work in my happy home-country. Now I must take the gaps in my material into consideration.

This study was written in a Displaced Persons camp where I am leading a most primitive life under most difficult conditions, my only property consisting of as many manuscripts and as much scientific material as I and my wife were able to carry with us when we were forced to abandon our home. What this means — to write a study without having access to the sources and to my special library —, will be clear to anyone acquainted with work on textual-historical and textual-critical problems. I have moreover experienced to the full the sad lot of homeless people. I have seen the injustice and lack of consideration which homeless refugees have to bear. This has caused me disquietude and often threatened to paralyse my efforts to continue my work. Parts of it would certainly have been better if I had had the possibility of working under less distracting circumstances.

Yet I am grateful to God for His having lent me His wondrous aid by granting me a mental diversion through this study.

Here I wish to express my deep gratitude to Mrs. E. Lambrino of Hiddesen-Detmold for her kindness in touching up my English.

Baltic University

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Arthur Vööbus.

I. The Position of the Problem.

Since Westcott and Hort the Peshitta has acquired the name of "the Syriac Vulgate". And, as a matter of fact, among the Syrian Christians the Peshitta takes the place of the Vulgate in the Latin church. Besides this, the Peshitta holds a very singular position, being the connecting spiritual link between the rival movements, for all the Syrian churches, Jacobites and Nestorians, Maronites and Melkites, employ it as the canonical text.

Our knowledge about this in many respects very remarkable text has been accumulating very slowly. We now know that the Peshitta is not a translation from the Greek but a revision of an Old Syriac version.¹⁾ We know, too, that its text has been copied with great minuteness and handed down from generation to generation more correctly than any other version in which the Bible text has been transmitted. But if we seek information about the time, the circumstances and the conditions of the circulation of the Peshitta in earlier periods, about its later fate and about its relations with its rivals, we find no elucidation reliable enough to satisfy the student of Christian antiquity.

Here it is unnecessary to go into the history of the problem. This can be done in a few words, for we have to deal with the views of one single man. Up to the present the entire information about the Peshitta has remained at the same stage as was reached by the English scholar Professor F. C. Burkitt at the beginning of the century.

At first Burkitt tried to collect data enabling him to invest Rabbula, Bishop of Edessa, with the authorship of the Peshitta. And granted that Rabbula was the author and creator of the Peshitta, it was easy to imagine this bishop, of whom we know that he governed his diocese with severity, carrying the Peshitta into effect and making it predominant. Rabbula's personality and energy were certainly capable of effecting the propagation of the Peshitta²⁾. All the more so as we possess canons for priests and clericals by Rabbula from which it appears that he had really set his heart on supplanting the Diatessaron and replacing it by the Four Gospel types.

On closer investigation these views are not tenable. I have demonstrated this in another study³⁾. Here I have the intention of subjecting a further opinion of Burkitt's to investigation. This is a question of greater importance and range than the former.

1) C. Peters, *Das Diatessaron Tatians. Seine Überlieferung und sein Nachwirken im Morgen- und Abendland sowie der heutige Stand seiner Erforschung*. OCP 123 (Roma 1939) 29 sqq.

2) *Early Eastern Christianity*. St. Margaret's Lectures 1904 on the Syriac-speaking Church (London 1904) 57, 62.

3) *Investigations into the Text of the New Testament used by Rabbula of Edessa*. CBU 59 (Pinneberg 1947).

On analysing Burkitt's opinions we find that the sustaining pillar of his theories was his assumption that there are sources which prove that the Peshitta obtained predominance from the time of the Bishop Rabbula. Let us quote his own words: "Thus at the time of Rabbula's death, in the circle especially attached to his memory and his policy, we find the New Testament Peshitta fully established. From that time onwards the Peshitta has remained in continuous possession. The Peshitta is quoted by Syriac writers of every class, and used liturgically by every Syriac-speaking sect"⁴). In other places he speaks with the same conviction about the documentary basis of the general occurrence of the Peshitta after Rabbula's death: "Before the episcopate of Rabbula the quotations of Syriac writers do not agree with the Peshitta New Testament, and they do very largely agree with the Diatessaron and the surviving MSS of the Evangelion da-Mepharreshe; after the episcopate of Rabbula they agree with the Peshitta and do not agree with the Diatessaron and the Evangelion da-Mepharreshe."⁵)

This was the thesis which Burkitt repeatedly submitted to the scientific world. He first published these views in 1901⁶). He then perfected them and re-published them in their final form some years later. He writes: "But the Patristic evidence that has been collected in this chapter does not suggest that the version to which the Sinai Palimpsest and Cureton's MS belong enjoyed a wide circulation in the Church history during the 4th and 5th centuries... It is evident that when Rabbula became bishop of Edessa the form in which the Gospel was practically known to Syriac-speaking Christians was Tatian's Diatessaron... Meanwhile the copies of the unrevised Evangelion da-Mepharreshe remained where they were... They are, so to speak, library volumes... To the contemporaries of Rabbula, who allowed them to rest undisturbed on their shelves, they were neither recommended to be used nor condemned to be suppressed by Church authority: they were simply old-fashioned books to be left alone and forgotten... And his testimony (i. e. the biographer) is borne out by that of later Syriac literature. Here and there a diligent search may pick out a reminiscence of the Diatessaron, or of texts akin to S and C, but from the time of Rabbula the Syriac Vulgate holds a position of absolute supremacy."⁷) And in his last article, "Syriac-speaking Christianity", it is manifest that he has no doubt of the correctness of his hypothesis⁸).

4) Early Eastern Christianity 52.

5) *ibid.* 56.

6) S. Ephraim's Quotations from the Gospel TS VII,2 (Cambridge 190).

7) Evangelion da-Mepharreshe. The Curetonian Version of the Four Gospels, with the readings of the Sinai-Palimpsest and the early Syriac Patristic evidence II (Cambridge 1905) 164 sq. 161.

8) Cambridge Ancient History XII (Cambridge 1939), 492 sqq.

It is surprising that during the long intervening period no thorough researches whatever have been made. There have merely been some discussions on Burkitt's various conclusions, especially those concerning Rabbula as the author of the Peshitta. But the cardinal opinion which formed the basis of all his theories has met with no opposition of any kind. Not the slightest doubt has arisen regarding his assertion that the Peshitta obtained prevalence during the first decades of the fifth century. And those few who refused to accept Rabbula as the author of the Peshitta, F. Nau⁹⁾ and I. B. Chabot¹⁰⁾, were in entire conformity with Burkitt on this point. His statement appeared to be satisfactory and was left undisputed. So the basic question which formed the fundament of all Burkitt's theories did not evoke discussion of any kind, let alone a desire to examine it more closely. Burkitt's authority dispersed the remotest shade of a doubt. Thus it came about that scholars like R. Duval¹¹⁾, A. Baumstark¹²⁾, O. Bardenhewer¹³⁾, M. J. Lagrange¹⁴⁾, etc. found Burkitt's views acceptable and shared them.

So these ideas about the immediate victory of the Peshitta and the obsolescence of Old Syriac versions have been accepted as proved facts and handed down as axioms¹⁵⁾ up to the present day¹⁶⁾.

9) Nau says: "les deux premiers (Sc et Ssc) n'étant que des curiosités littéraires." Dictionnaire de la Bible V, 2 (Paris 1912) col. 1926.

10) Littérature syriaque (Paris 1934) 19 sq.

11) La littérature syriaque (Paris 1907) 38.

12) Geschichte der syrischen Literatur (Bonn 1922) 74.

13) Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur IV (Freiburg 1924) 323, 390.

14) Histoire ancienne du canon du Nouveau Testament (Paris 1933) 130, 162.

15) see Peters, Das Diatessaron Tatians 29 sqq. cf. 43 sqq.

16) see P. E. Kahle, The Cairo Geniza. The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy (London 1947) 200, 210 sq.

II. The Gospel Text Used by Rabbula.

Decisive clarity regarding the text of the New Testament used by Rabbula depends on the possibility of deciding from his own works which New Testament text he used. But our first acquaintance with the relics of his works is not at all satisfactory. What is left of them is not much more than the ruins of what was once a vast literature¹⁾.

On seeing how little of Rabbula's original material has been spared by the tooth of time and realising that this little does not help us on at all, we almost lose all hope of proceeding further in this direction. Yet all these deficiencies are made good by a certain work which, however, does not come from Rabbula himself. This work is from the pen of Cyril, the patriarch of Alexandria, and is his *Περὶ τῆς ὁρθῆς πίστεως*²⁾ a work of polemical-dogmatical character. We owe the service rendered us by this work to the form which it has assumed in the Syriac idiom³⁾. Namely Cyril sent this work to Edessa to have it translated by Rabbula. The Greek original of the letter is not extant and all we know is that it existed as a fragment in the acts of the fifth Council⁴⁾. Migne gives it in Latin⁵⁾. But in the Syriac translation it has been preserved as a whole⁶⁾. In this letter Cyril refers to their cordial and frequent correspondence and sends his treatise to Rabbula with the request that it be translated, adapted, if necessary, and read to his congregation, clergy and brethren. He also mentions that he has done likewise with Rabbula's epistles and read them to the bishops and the clergy in Alexandria.

Rabbula, who was familiar with both the Greek and Syriac languages, translated Cyril's work into Syriac together with Cyril's accompanying epistle.

Whoever studies early Syriac Christian literature will frequently meet with a manner of translating employed by old authors, namely with a translation technique whereby the complete text is translated, without the quotations from the Old and New Testament being retranslated, these simply being inserted as they stood in the customary familiar Bible text. By this method translations of foreign literature were interspersed with the translator's own familiar Bible text. We are thereby given a promising possibility of productively utilizing translated literature from a scientific point of view provided that in each case it is fully ascertained whether we are really dealing with an inserted text.

1) Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* 71 sqq.

2) Migne, *Patrologia graeca* LXXVI, col. 1133 sqq.

3) *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, ed. P. Bedjan V (Parisijs 1895) 628 sqq.

4) Mansi, *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* IX, 245 sq.

5) Migne *PG* LXXVII, col. 347 sq.

6) *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae episcopi Edesseni, Balaei aliorumque opera selecta*, ed. J. J. Overbeck (Oxonii 1865) 239 sqq.

In another study I have thoroughly investigated the text of the quotations and done the preparatory work⁷⁾. It is a most fortunate circumstance indeed that in Rabbula's translation of the treatise we have to do with this translation technique. Instead of translating the quotations, Rabbula adhered to his own biblical text. Consequently the text of the treatise is by Cyril, but in its Syriac quotations we hear Rabbula himself. In other words — we have brought parts of Rabbula's text of the New Testament from darkness into daylight. Rabbula himself presents us with his Holy Codex and allows us to turn its leaves.

Here we find ourselves face to face with the first great surprise. The examples examined display essential deviations from the Peshitta. In the whole treatise about 35 quotations from the Gospel are to be found, but the careful study of these passages leads us to the conclusion that less than a quarter of them conform to the Peshitta. And here we must not omit to mention the fact that these quotations are without exception very short. Our treatise contains more than 40 quotations from epistles, but some of them only coincide with the Peshitta sporadically, and they, too, are very short and colourless. It is clear that the text of the New Testament used by Rabbula was not the Peshitta⁸⁾, neither in the Gospel text nor in its Apostolos portion. This fact is most astonishing to everybody, even to those very few who have not shared the general opinion that Rabbula was the creator of the Peshitta.

I have further made an exhaustive search into ancient Syriac literature, as well as Armenian and Arabic. All these literatures are full of reminiscences of old texts and are a mine of wealth, containing scattered but very precious fragments. We find fragments of an ancient layer of old text-traditions here and there in the old patristic literature. These data provide us with valuable material which throws light upon discrepancies in Rabbula's reading, thus enabling us to understand the peculiarities of his rendering. Thanks to this supply of Syriac, Arabic and Armenian material, the variants and digressions of Rabbula's readings can be elucidated, thus enabling us to recognize clearly that these cannot be chance digressions but that we are dealing with text variants which were widely known and used and are also to be found as dispersed fragments in other ancient Christian literatures of the Orient.

Here it is unnecessary to expand on this very interesting and highly instructive material⁹⁾ and I must confine myself to a statement of the

7) see my Investigations into the Text of the New Testament Used by Rabbula.

8) *ibid.* 15 sqq.

9) *ibid.* 18 sqq.

results of my investigations. In the light of the archaic Syriac text-traditions Rabbula's deviations assume a new aspect, and we are astonished to find something unexpected at this point. Rabbula's quotations have the indubitable characteristics of Old Syriac text-traditions originating in the Diatessaron. They represent variants of great importance and value, taken from Tatian's harmonistic work. A long series of the quotations are affirmed by Old Syriac text traditions transmitted to us by Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin. It is absolutely certain that Rabbula's Gospel belonged to this family of *Vetus Syra*. A certain amount of the independent manner of readings¹⁰⁾ is also common to the other Old Syriac Gospels. Many indications prove that behind those two Gospels which are occasionally transmitted to us as Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin there must have been a whole family of *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* texts. And Rabbula's Gospel text also belongs to this family.

10) *ibid.* 27 sq.

III. The Gospel Text Used in Rabbula's Immediate Surroundings.

1. The Syriac Biography.

The surprising result of our investigations, namely the discovery of Rabbula's authentic text of the New Testament, opens a wholly new perspective which threatens to put the traditional opinion about the Peshitta in an essentially new light. It throws a first dark shadow upon the axiomatic and unquestioned opinion about the victory of the Peshitta in the first decades of the fifth century. So we have to put Burkitt's fundamental argument under careful examination, it being his thesis that "in the circle especially attached to his memory and his policy we find the New Testament Peshitta fully established." This view of Burkitt's is comparable to a fulcrum in his construction and is very heavily buttressed by numerous other hypotheses. We have now to prove whether it is able to survive a critical attack.

What was the basis on which Burkitt founded his assumption that the Peshitta was of such early prevalence? Burkitt draws our attention to the biography of Rabbula¹⁾, enthusiastically written in grateful memory of a man of distinction on the episcopal chair at Edessa, the author of which preferred to be anonymous, but as he was closely acquainted with the bishop's habits and manners we must seek him among the more immediate surroundings of Edessa, perhaps even in the circles of the clergy itself.

In the course of his narrative Rabbula's biographer has occasion to quote the New Testament several times, but he is more modest than the Syriac authors usually are. Still there are five quotations and one reminiscence. Burkitt makes the following remark about them: "and each time the quotations are in marked accord with the text of the Peshitta."²⁾ Some of these passages, however, give a most indistinct picture, for which there are various reasons. In one case the passage is lacking in *Vetus Syra*; in the second case we have to deal with a quotation taken either from the Peshitta or from *Vetus Syra*, and in the third case the quotation is too short and colourless to permit us to make a final decision³⁾. But two passages are really capable of bearing witness.

Overbeck, 20. Jn. I, 14: "the Word has become flesh and has dwelt among us." This reading conforms literally to the Peshitta

1) *Opera selecta*, ed. Overbeck 159 sqq.

2) *Early Eastern Christianity* 52.

3) *Opera selecta*, ed. Overbeck 178, 13—14; 197, 13—15; 181, 20—21, 204, 16—17.

which has rendered the Greek with the Syriac equivalent *besrâ*. But the Old Syriac versions read differently. Syr-Cur has: "and the Word has become body and has dwelt among us". *Besrâ* is substituted here by *pagrâ* = $\sigma\omega\mu\alpha$ and moreover *melthâ* = "the word" is taken as feminine and the whole sentence is accommodated to this rendering. In the Syriac *melthâ* is feminine in reality but in the Peshitta *melthâ* is used here as masculine on account of the Greek $\delta\ \lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$. In Syr-Sin this passage is omitted, but both the peculiarities of this rendering recur in Titus of Bostra in Contra manichaeos IV, 34⁴) and also in Aphrahat⁵).

The second case does not deal with a quotation but with a reminiscence, provided that it is taken from the Lord's Prayer. Overbeck 168,2 we find: "bread of their need". This rendering of a reminiscence evidently proves the text to agree with the reading of the Lord's Prayer in Mt. VI, 11: "bread of our need today" and in Lc. XI, 3 "bread of our need every day". Without exception all the manuscripts of the Peshitta display this reading. Contrarily the Old Syriac versions have rendered the Greek $\epsilon\pi\iota\theta\epsilon\sigma\iota\omicron\nu$ by another word: *amînâ* = "constant".

As already mentioned, although the majority of the quotations in the biography are colourless, the two passages yet enable us to decide which Gospel text was used by the biographer. Evidently it was the Peshitta and here we have to accept Burkitt's conclusion. The fact of the Peshitta Gospel text having been used at Edessa or in its surroundings a short time after 435 provides us with valuable data for the history of the Syriac New Testament.

But if we now want to hear and to see further evidence by Burkitt about the victory of the Peshitta, we are surprised at finding nothing. Rabbula's biography with its quotations constitutes for Burkitt the one and only firmly supported basis, narrow as it is. Leaving it and asserting his opinions on the general victory of the Peshitta in the total circulation of the biblical text of the New Testament as a fact, he does not add any contributions to the testimony of the biography and gradually proceeds into the domain of hypotheses. Regarding problems of Syriac documents he says: "after the episcopate of Rabbula they agree with the Peshitta and do not agree with the Diatessaron and the Evangelion da Mepharreshe"⁶). It is surprising that nobody has noticed the absence of any proof in support of this statement. But Burkitt could not produce one, for the simple reason that it is absolutely impossible to do so.

4) Contra manichaeos libri quatuor, syriace, ed. P. A. de Lagarde (Berolini 1859) 145.

5) Demonstrationes, ed. I. Parisot. Patrologia Syriaca I (Parisiis 1895) 281, 392.

6) Early Eastern Christianity 56.

2. Greek Remains of a Lost Biography.

In this situation we must go on an independent search for a path out of the quicksands of hypotheses and try to find firm ground under our feet in documentary evidence. From a methodical aspect not every document can be used. The literary monuments written before Rabbula's death are of no value here, but on the other hand there is only a very limited number of sources. Very few literary monuments of this period are handed down to us from original Syriac literature. And as the original Syriac documents do not enable us to proceed further, we are obliged to try some other path through the region of Syriac as well as Greek translations. So we must needs be satisfied with a very narrow path and with what is at first sight a rather unpromising outlook. This compels us to welcome any document which may be of service.

We first find a piece in Greek from another biography of Rabbula, the Syriac original of which is lost. This piece is transmitted to us in the biography of the famous and admired monk, Alexander Akoimetos, † ca. 430, a contemporary of Rabbula. It is written in Greek and edited from the only manuscript Parisinus 1452 by de Stoop⁷⁾. Now this text is intercalated by a part which does not harmonise with it at all. This piece is, on the contrary, so badly connected with the rest of the text that the joint is very noticeable⁸⁾. An examination of the two texts suggests two authors, one for the biography of Alexander and the other for the intercalated parts.

The author of this biography pretends to be one of Alexander's disciples who had accompanied his master to the rivers of Euphrates and intends relating events from his own experience, but in the intercalated piece we enter on the scene after Alexander himself has disappeared from view and we have before us the events and episodes which centre in Rabbula. This record moreover surprises us by its length.

The details in both texts oblige us to infer the existence of two writers. To the observations made by de Stoop⁹⁾ I for my part was able to contribute an essential point proving the two authors to be a fact¹⁰⁾. With regard to our problem the Gospel texts used by the two writers are most promising. While the quotations from the New Testament in Alexander's biography are the common ones taken from the well-known Koine text, the quotations in the intercalated

7) Vie d'Alexandre L'Acémète, éd. par E. de Stoop. *Patrologia Orientalis* VI (Paris 1911) 643 sqq.

8) *ibid.* 663—675.

9) *ibid.* 655.

10) La vie d'Alexandre en grec — un témoin d'une biographie inconnue de Rabbula écrite en syriaque. CBU 62 (Pinneberg 1948).

part display quite a singular aspect. The same observations can be made on the quotations from the Old Testament. The whole series of quotations in Alexander's biography is the common one taken from the Septuaginta, but the quotation in the intercalated piece is very strange.

So the intercalated long piece is clearly proved to be from the pen of an anonymous writer. Another point is, however, more important. All reliable indications and cogent reasons lead us to believe that this biography of Rabbula must have been originally written in Syriac ¹¹⁾. Thereby we learn of the existence of a second biography of Rabbula which is not extant but a portion of which has been handed over to us in a Greek translation. This relic is of such great value to us because of its having preserved some quotations from the New Testament. We are forced to consult every document, even hidden ones, to add to our information about our problem. And our document won back for the history of Syriac literature proves to be a singular source of literary wealth. What has occasionally survived from quotations is not much, but it is of extraordinarily high quality.

In chapter XVIII after the introduction κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον we find the quotation Mt. VI, 33 in the following form ¹²⁾, the text of which we place in the first column and the text of Koine in the second.

ἀλλὰ ζητῇ κατὰ τὸ γεγραμμένον
τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν καὶ τὴν
δικαιοσύνην τοῦ θεοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα
πάντα ἐκ περισσοῦ προστεθήσεται αὐτῷ

ζητεῖτε δὲ πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν
τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην
αὐτοῦ, καὶ ταῦτα πάντα προστε-
θήσεται ὑμῖν.

In the text it is stated that the text is a quotation in spite of its being transposed from the second person plural into the second person singular. The discrepancies between both texts are very considerable. At first sight it has the appearance of a vagary. There is very little to quote from the Greek text traditions in explanation of our enigmatical passage. Chrysostomos repeatedly cites a form in his homilies about the Gospel of St. Matthew where πρῶτον is omitted and here we also find the deviation τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν ¹³⁾. The same variant is also to be found in some other documents, for instance in Clemens. The variant τὴν δικαιοσύνην τοῦ θεοῦ has a witness in Afra: quaerite primo regnum et iustitiam Dei ¹⁴⁾. But on careful investigation we must say this is all, and our evidence is exhausted without having proffered us a satisfactory solution of our enigmatical quotation, especially of the characteristic pleonasm. And obviously the problem of the passage lies precisely in the word ἐκ περισσοῦ, but any solution that might derive from Greek sources is quite out of the question, for here we have to do not with an original Greek composition but with a

11) *ibid.*

12) Vie d'Alexandre L'Acémète, éd. de Stoop 671.

13) Migne PG LVII, col. 303, 338.

14) Itala, hrsg. A. Jülicher I (Berlin 1938) 35.

translation from Syriac. And things take quite another turn if we throw the light afforded us by ancient Syriac versions on the investigation of our quotation.

The Greek material already seems to contain a hint in Justin's reading ζητεῖτε δὲ τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν¹⁵⁾, which inclines us to the supposition that perhaps Tatian had read this quotation in Rome and introduced it in his Harmony. This appears still more probable when the same variation recurs in the Palestinian Fragments. Here the quotation is given: "seek the righteousness and the kingdom of heaven"¹⁶⁾. Indeed Tatian's influence is a familiar fact to us in this connection¹⁷⁾ and our approach to the tradition of Diatessaron itself is based on this assumption.

At the very beginning there is a happy coincidence. Here the Arabic Diatessaron, though poor in its independent vocabulary on account of having preserved very little and forgotten very much, has a great surprise in store for us¹⁸⁾:

اطلبوا أولا ملكوت الله وبره
وجميع هذه تاتيكم فاضلة لكم

"seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these (things) shall be abundantly added unto you." The essential peculiarity of our quotation is revealed. This is "fâdil". According to Bar Bahlul, this word has its Syriac equivalent in "men jathîrû"¹⁹⁾ which must have existed in the Syriac original of Diatessaron on which the Arabic translation is based. For whereas this addition is lacking in the Peshitta,

وكل ما فيكم من هذه

"and all these (things) are added unto you", it is certain that here the Arabic Diatessaron preserves Tatian's original reading. An Italian translation of the younger sister of the Arabic Harmony, i. e. the Persian Diatessaron, gives here: e anche quelle cose vi darà in soprappiù²⁰⁾. At all events our chief peculiarity of pleonastic addition is warranted as a genuine reading in Diatessaron.

Until now the Syriac form of our quotation is lacking. This is also handed over to us, not in Aphrahat who has a reminiscence without

15) Apologia I pro christianis, Migne, PG VI, col. 352 B.

16) Christlich-palästinisch-aramäische Texte und Fragmente, hrsg. H. Duen-sing (Göttingen 1906) 77, fol. 34 v.

17) see my Investigations 21 sqq.

18) Tatiani evangeliorum harmoniae arabice, ed. A. Ciasca (Romae 1888) 38.

19) Lexicon syriacum auctore Hassano Bar Bahlule, ed. Rubens Duval, I (Paris 1901) 853 sq. cf. Payne Smith, Thesaurus Syriacus col. 1652.

20) Notizia su un Diatessaron persiano tradotto dal siriano. G. Messina. Biblica et orientalia X (Roma 1943).

pleonastic addition but by Ephrem's Hymni de miraculis XII which presents it in a metrical text, connected with the characteristic "lam", the formula with which the Syriac Fathers usually introduced a quotation from the Scriptures²¹).

ܡܬܝܠܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ
ܡܬܝܠܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ
ܡܬܝܠܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ

"for, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these are abundantly added unto you." The abridged form of our quotation is also to be found in Liber Graduum²²) and precisely the passage of particular interest to us:

ܡܬܝܠܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ

"then our Lord has said to them that this shall be abundantly added unto you."

So we have established the origin and meaning of the peculiarity of our quotation in its essential point. It is not a passage which was dealt with arbitrarily and now we understand how our Greek text is able to give us important information about the Syriac original.

We must now continue our search for some information about the history of this peculiarity. Ephrem and Liber graduum usually represent the real Diatessaron text. Is our deviation only to be found in the Diatessaron, or has it survived elsewhere?

At first sight it seems to be lost in the representatives of Vetus Syra. The passage is missing in Syr-Sin and Syr-Cur has lost this addition. But in looking up the parallel text in Lc. XII, 31, in which we did not expect to find it, we are recompensed—we find in Syr-Cur:

ܡܬܝܠܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ
ܡܬܝܠܬܐ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ ܕܥܠܐ

"seek the kingdom of God and these shall be abundantly added unto you" Even in the Vetus Syra reading the pleonastic addition is also warranted. This last fact is very important.

21) S. Ephraem Syri Hymni et sermones, ed. Th. J. Lamý II (Mechliniae 1866) 717.

22) ed. M. Kmosko. Patrologia Syriaca I, 3 (Parisiis 1926) 804.

Thorough investigation reveals that our rendering with a pleonastic addition must be a rare reading. Wherever I came across this quotation in the old Syriac patristic literature, it had usually been deprived of its pleonastic addition.

The same is to be said about the Old Armenian literature. The pleonastic addition was naturally also contained in the Armenian Diatessaron, but it seems that the Old Armenian versions lost it. A very faint vestige of its former existence on Armenian ground is to be observed. It is interesting to read the following form in the Armenian translation of John Chrysostomos' homilies — it is worthy of notice that here the quotations are not translated but taken from an Old Armenian Gospel text²³).

Խնդրեցէք, ասէ, զարքայութիւն Աստուծոյ եւ
զարդարութիւն նորա, եւ այս ամենայն տացի
եւ յաւելցի ձեզ :

"seek, says he, the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all this shall be given and added unto you". The end of the quotation in this singular form is repeatedly rendered in the Armenian text, contrarily to the Greek original²⁴) and the text of Zohrabian²⁵):

ζητεῖτε τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν
οὐρανῶν, καὶ ταῦτα πάντα
προστεθήσεται ὑμῖν.

Խնդրեցէք նախ զարքայութիւն
Աստուծոյ եւ զարդարութիւն
նորա, եւ այդ
ամենայն յաւելցի ձեզ :

This particular form seems to be mutilated and it seems to reveal that the text formerly contained something which was eliminated later and apparently substituted by a gloss. But I must confess at this point that I am not quite sure, since I have met with the same peculiar reading on the Old Latin ground preserved by the "Commentarius in prophetas minores tres" of Rufinus of Aquileja: quaerite primo regnum Dei et justitiam ejus et haec omnia apponentur et adjiciantur vobis (Migne PL XXI, 1048).

Now that the essential point of our quotation is disclosed, the other elements lose their importance. We have met with some of them on Greek ground here and there and some of them are also to be found on Syriac ground. And here we find some variations unwarranted in all the Greek manuscripts. As a proof of the last words and a new testimony to the element from Diatessaron, I present a quotation of

23) *Yawetaranagirn Matthêos* II (I Wenetik 1826) 215, 348, 414.

24) In Matth. homil XXII al. XXIII. Migne PG LVII. 7, I. col. 302.

25) ed. (I Wenetik 1805).

twofold importance from an Old Syriac Gospel text. The Syriac recension of Anthony's biography written by Athanasius contains the following²⁶⁾:

ܐܠܡܐ ܡܡܫܐܝܐ ܠܡܠܟܐ ܡܬܝܠܕܐ ܡܢ ܥܡܐ
ܠܥܠܡ ܕܥܡܝܐ ܕܥܡܝܐ ܕܥܡܝܐ ܕܥܡܝܐ

"but seek the kingdom of God and his honour and these shall be abundantly added unto you."

So our first inquiry has acquainted us with a very interesting and archaic quotation. But this is not the only surprise prepared for us by this valuable piece. A still greater one awaits us.

In chapter II there is a quotation introduced by γέγραπται γάρ ἡμῖν²⁷⁾. I put the quotation in the first column and the parallel texts of synoptics in the second column.

ὁ ἀπολέσας τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ
ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ, εἰς ζωὴν
αἰώνιον εὐρήσει αὐτήν.

Mt XVI, 25: ὅς δ' ἂν ἀπολέσῃ τὴν
ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ, εὐρήσει
αὐτήν. Cf. Mc. VIII, 35; Lc. IX, 24.
Mt. X, 39: καὶ ὁ ἀπολέσας τὴν ψυχὴν
αὐτοῦ ἕνεκεν ἐμοῦ εὐρήσει αὐτήν.

Our quotation, when compared with the synoptic readings, displays foreign elements. Coming as it does from the Greek manuscript-tradition, the temptation is still greater to lend no more importance to it than to a vague paraphrastic text. But we must bear in mind that here, too, we have a translation from Syriac before us. It renders the service of a transparency.

Already in the Greek original there are many indications of which direction the solution of this question must lie in if we take Jn. XII, 25 into consideration:

ὁ μισῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ
τούτῳ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον φυλάξει αὐτήν.

Our quotation does not entirely coincide with the passage in John. Neither of verbs are used in our quotation, and in the entire tradition of Greek manuscripts there is only Iφ^{b.1216} which instead of μισῶν reads ἀπολέσας²⁸⁾. But, nevertheless, the comparison is very instructive. A good part of Jn. XII, 25 really recurs in our quotation. Consequently our quotation reveals its character as a harmonistic text in

26) The Book of Paradise, being the histories and sayings of the monks and ascetics of the Egyptian desert by Palladius, Hieronymus and others, ed. by E. A. W. Budge (London 1904) 46.

27) Vie d'Alexandre L'Acémète, éd. de Stoop 665.

28) Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments, hrsg. H. v. Soden II (Göttingen 1913) 452.

which the frame is taken from the Synoptics and combined with the substance of Jn. XII, 25. This fact must guide our further investigations.

In the course of our inquiry we see that the tradition of the Diatessaron has sacrificed its peculiarities to the Peshitta and the Persian Diatessaron is not available to me as a source of reference. Also the Old Georgian Gospels seem at best to yield nothing for the moment.

But, contrary to our expectations, the Western branch of the tradition of Diatessaron renders us a great service. Here the ancient and authentic readings have survived and are preserved by several sources of the best qualification. The Diatessaron in the Old Venetian dialect reads: *che perderà per mi la vita corporale, guadagnerà la vita eternale de l'anima* ²⁹). And in another place it reads: *e quello che perderà la soa anema en questo mondo per mi, si la guadagnerà en vita eterna* ³⁰). This statement is seconded by a witness from the Old Latin ground. The codex Claromontanus reads: *et qui perdiderit animam suam propter me, inveniet eam in vitam aeternam* ³¹), contrary to the Vulgate: *et qui perdiderit animam suam propter me, inveniet eam*.

Closer investigation of old patristic material leads us to recognise that this remarkable rendering had a wide circulation in the Itala texts. Examples can verify this. Augustinus quotes it several times. It recurs in his „Contra Faustum“ (Migne, PL XLII, 407). It is to be found in a popular legend of Antonius (ed. Noordeloos et Halkin, *Analecta Bollandiana* 1943, 227). The liturgical texts have also preserved it occasionally. This remarkable rendering was contained in the text which was to be read on the memorial day of St. Cyprianus at Carthago (*Miscellanea Agostiniana*, ed. Morin, Romae 1930, I, 529 sq.). The *Liturgia Mozarabica* contains it too (Migne, PL LXXXV, 970).

Aug. and Vita Ant.	Missale.
et qui perdiderit animam suam propter me, in vitam eternam inveniet eam.	et quique perdiderit animam suam propter me in vitam eternam inveniet eam.

We are furnished with material of a kind which even surpasses our expectations. Here we can put aside the little deviations and minutiae which appertain to the internal problem of the Diatessaron. The fact of primary importance is that our observation is attested by

29) *Il Diatessaron in volgare italiano. Testi inediti dei secoli XIII—XIV. pubblicati a cura di Prof. V. Todesco. A. Vaccari, M. Vattasso. Studi e Testi 81 (Citta del Vaticano 1938) 49.*

30) *ibid.* 120.

31) *Itala*, ed. Jülicher I, 63.

tessaron. This however is, for the present, a question of minor importance and it may lead us far enough to pursue this particular problem³⁸).

This Syriac rendering contains several elements which prove it to be a composition of Tatian's. The passage is especially suited to acquaint us with Tatian as a great artist who broke the text up into particles and with his excellent taste created a mosaic of greater beauty and charm. We are also astonished to behold his masterly hand polishing his filigree work into a brilliant style. But we also learn to regard him from a different point of view. His exegetical opinions too had the right to cooperate in the new wording of his harmony. In another study I have discussed the exegetical structure of this passage in Tatian's work³⁹).

After having confirmed this, we must direct our attention to another question. Regarding the indications, the translator of the Greek biography has rendered the quotations in the Syriac biography into Greek with great accuracy. It seems that this can be depended on. In this case the quotation in the Syriac original of the biography must have differed from that in Diatessaron. A reconstruction must render the passage as follows:

ܕܡܫܚܐ ܕܡܫܚܐ ܕܡܫܚܐ

"shall find it (the soul) for eternal life." If the presumption is correct that our quotation is translated accurately, we are forced to conclude that the quotation in the Syriac biography was not taken directly from the Diatessaron itself. This form cannot be an older text which had never undergone a revision, but it must be a Gospel text to which the Greek original had had access. On the one hand the ψυχή has made an inroad into the citation, but on the other hand the Greek influence is not strong enough to displace the harmonistic elements. It seems that here there is an indication that we should seek the origin of this form in an Old Syriac Gospel text.

In this quotation we again have to do with a rare form. Both representatives of Vetus Syra have lost it. It is not superfluous to remark that this circumstance is very singular, as the passage recurs in so many

38) Here it is worthy of mention, that Ephraem had apparently read this passage in his Diatessaron without ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ. Besides the above-mentioned Syriac rendering we can take a quotation in the Hymns about 40 Martyrs into consideration. The original of this Syriac document is lost, but we have the text in a Greek translation. The quotations are also translated from Syriac, but obviously under the influence of the Greek Gospel text. Here our quotation is rendered as follows: ὁ ἀπολῶν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ἐνεκεν ἐμοῦ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον φυλάξει αὐτήν. In sanctos XL Martyres. Opera omnia graece II, 355 B.

39) Untersuchungen über die Authentizität 22 sq.

places in the four Gospels of Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin but has not found a hiding-place. In the ancient Syriac patristic literature we also run across it, but in each case the process of accommodation to Jn. XII, 25 has almost reached its end. I have not met with this text cited in its original form as in Ephrem. But the proofs of its belonging to the Old Syriac Gospel are not wholly lacking. I have found that the Syriac Acts of the Persians Martyrs, well-known as the collection of Maroutha, shelter an Old Syriac Gospel text of a special pattern. Especially the first book is crammed with such quotations and gives this rare passage in the following form⁴⁰):

ܡܢ ܕܢܫܐ ܠܡ ܢܦܘܬܐ ܡܠܐ ܚܝܐ
ܕܡܢ ܕܢܫܐ ܠܡ ܢܦܘܬܐ ܡܠܐ ܚܝܐ

"whosoever shall lose his soul for the sake of my name, shall find it for eternal life." The passage has lost the genuine exegetical ferment of the Diatessaron. This form already contains the $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ and dates from the same phase of textual development as did apparently the Syriac original of the lost biography. But as I have pointed out elsewhere, the quotation from the Acts of Martyrs is taken from an Old Syriac Gospel of a special character⁴¹).

However, we possess further evidence. On Arabic ground the harmonistic quotation recurs in the first mîmar of Abu Qurra about the legislation of Moses⁴²):

ܡܢ ܕܢܫܐ ܠܡ ܢܦܘܬܐ ܡܠܐ ܚܝܐ
ܕܡܢ ܕܢܫܐ ܠܡ ܢܦܘܬܐ ܡܠܐ ܚܝܐ

"whosoever lose his soul for my sake shall find it in eternal life." Investigation reveals that Abu Qurra used a special Arabic Gospel-text based not upon a Greek manuscript but upon a Syriac one and not exactly upon a model of the Peshitta but upon an Old Syriac text type. And here, too, the explanation is given how as late as at the end of the 8th century or the beginning of the 9th century, the harmonized text still survived.

40) Acta martyrum et sanctorum, ed. P. Bedjan II (Parisiis 1891) 67.

41) Die Evangelienzitate in der Einleitung in die syrischen Märtyrerakten. It will be published in Biblica XXX (Roma 1949).

42) Les oeuvres arabes de Theodore Aboucara, ed. C. Bacha (Beyrouth 1904) 147.

We can now sum up our results. Through the medium of an exact Greek translation we now see the fragments of the Syriac original of the lost biography before us. But what we observe here can seldom afford sufficiently cogent evidence to throw so bright a light upon the question which Gospel text was used by the anonymous biographer.

No doubt remains that this text was not the Peshitta. Without delay we register this important result.

How a positive answer to our question is to be given is an independent problem. Was the text the Syriac Diatessaron or was it a form of an *Evangelion da-Mepharreshe*?

We are indeed tempted to look upon Tatian's readings as quotations taken directly from the Diatessaron itself. Burkitt was of opinion that when a quotation does not coincide with the Peshitta on the one hand and with Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin on the other it belongs to the Diatessaron. This principle was carried through by him in his classification of Ephrem's authentic works⁴³).

Yet in forming a decision as to whether a quotation is taken from the Diatessaron itself or from a text influenced by the Diatessaron, precaution is highly advisable. We must not forget that we usually have to do with a limited outlook. There are only two manuscripts extant from a large family of Old Syriac versions. And nobody can say what was in other manuscripts⁴⁴).

Here also we must take this precaution into consideration. Firstly, the factors are missing which might constrain us to see behind our quotations the Diatessaron itself. This is contradicted by various observations. Besides we can hardly expect from a devoted biographer of Rabbula a Gospel harmony.

There are moreover deliberations which clearly hint at the Old Syriac versions. The first quotation was to be found in the Old Syriac version and the second quotation bore the unmistakable stamp of a later phase of the development of Tatian's text. Its existence in Old Syriac Gospels is warranted by the Syriac Acts of the Persian Martyrs and indirectly by the Abu Qurra's Arabic Gospel-text based upon an Old Syriac text-type.

In view of these facts we are obliged to look upon the quotations as having been taken from an Old Syriac Gospel. This *Evangelion da Mepharreshe* must have been of a special type which had greater intimacy and affinity with the Diatessaron and has preserved a larger number of peculiarities in its readings than Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin.

43) S. Ephraim's Quotations from the Gospel 25 sqq.

44) see my *Die Evangelienzitate in der Einleitung in die syrischen Märtyrerakten*.

3. The Syriac Translation of the Greek Letter Sent to Bishop Gamallinos.

The Syriac biographer gives us information about Rabbula's correspondence. He saw 46 letters sent to bishops, kings, prominent persons and monks. We learn, too, that these letters were written in Greek. The perusal of this correspondence gave the biographer the idea of translating this material¹). We do not know whether he ever carried out this plan.

Of Rabbula's Greek letters translated into Syriac²), only one is extant. This is a letter written to Gamallinos (Gemellinos) the Bishop of Perrha (?) about the monks who had used the eucharist as daily food. This document exists in a sole manuscript Add. 17.202 in the British Museum, edited together with other fragments of Rabbula³). We do not know who was the translator. But if the letter was in reality from Rabbula's pen⁴), it seems that the translator must have come from the immediate surroundings of the famous bishop of Edessa.

Our letter does not contain more than a fragment, but in it is a quotation of an exotic pattern which is able to furnish us with fresh information. This text is as follows⁵):

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ
ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ

"whosoever eats my body and drinks my blood, has said the Son of God, he in me and I in him." This quotation — it is Jn. VI, 56 — cannot be taken from the Peshitta, which reads in the second part:

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ

"in me abides and I in him", which rendering is in verbal coincidence with the Greek ἐν ἐμοὶ μένει καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ Up to the present we know of no manuscript of the Peshitta in which this remarkable omission occurs. But, on the contrary, this omission in our quotation in opposition to the Peshitta and the Greek original proves that it derives from the Old Syriac text-traditions. For the Sinai palimpsest actually reads:

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ ܕܥܝܠܐ

"in me he and I in him", precisely the same rendering as in our letter.

1) Opera selecta, ed. Overbeck 200.

2) Baumstark, Geschichte der syrischen Literatur 72.

3) Opera selecta 230—238.

4) According to some witnesses the letter does not belong to Rabbula but to Paul, the monophysitic Bishop of Edessa. This is however not absolutely clear and incontestable.

5) Opera selecta, ed. Overbeck 235.

IV. The Gospel Text in the Syriac Translation of the Acts of the Synod at Ephesus.

Our investigation of Rabbula's biography in the Greek translation is more richly recompensed than we had hoped. Then we have invaded deeper into the surroundings of the circle especially attached to Rabbula's memory. Through it we have made a conquest of some new ground and torn it from the regions of the history of the Syriac Gospels, hitherto unknown to us. These fresh results are sufficiently enticing for us to continue our investigation.

Owing to the lack of original Syriac sources, we are ready to lend our attention to any literary monument which may be of some help to us. There is a document which can be of use to us. It is not an original Syriac writing, but again a translation; this time, however, a translation from the Greek original into Syriac. The document in question is the Syriac translation of the acts of the Synod at Ephesus, well-known by the name of Latrocinium of Ephesus, which was summoned in August 449 A. D. Solely the circles of the Monophysites have had a comprehensible interest in preserving memories of the unworthy events connected with this riotous procedure. It affords us an explanation why the preservation of the original acts was unfortunate. Whereas the Greek record of the first day of the conference is preserved, thanks to the happy circumstance that it was to be read at the Synod at Chalcedon and to be added to the synodical acts, the record of the last day of the Synod at Ephesus perished. The Syrians alone have preserved it in a beautiful manuscript Add. 14530 written in Estrangelo¹). The text is edited by Perry²).

We have a certain amount of information regarding the destiny of this manuscript. The writing of this code was brought to an end in Ijār 10th 826 gr. = on May 10th 535 A. D. by the monk Johannan in the convent of Eusebios of *Kafrâ d Barthâ*. The code was appropriated by this convent and included in its library³).

We have been led to expect information about the translation rather than about the transcription of the acts. We know that this transcription is based on an older Syriac code. When we go on to inquire into the date of the older Syriac code which was in the hands of the same monk Johannan, we must content ourselves with suppositions. But we have very good reasons for assuming that the Syriac translation from the Greek acts was effected only a short time after the

1) W. Wright, Catalogue of Syriac manuscripts in the British Museum II (London 1871) 1027.

2) *Secundam synodum Ephesinam*, ed. S. G. F. Perry (Oxonii 1875).

3) *ibid.* 254 sq.

Synod. Several circumstances must here be taken into consideration. Firstly, it is natural to think that such an important document as the acts with their resolutions were to the Monophysites was translated without delay for the church whose congregation mainly spoke only Syriac. But the dogmatic combats which had broken out between the Diophysites and the Monophysites had also made a translation of this document urgently necessary. And where was better material to be found than in the acts of the Synod containing decisions regarding suspensions of the bishops of the opposing party? These had certainly been distributed to the bishops, clerics and monks with the aim of their being well utilized in the interests of Monophysitism. The Monophysites will hardly have tarried with the delivery of such suitable documents to the clergy and the monks. Is there then any valid reason why we should not conclude that the Syriac translation was done shortly after the Synod of 449? Very probably this translation was done at Edessa.

Our interest centres on the quotations in this Syriac translation. Whoever reads the text with attention cannot fail to notice the remarkable renderings of the Greek quotations in Syriac. But only by a thorough investigation can our document be induced to disclose its secret.

We have already mentioned that the Greek original perished. The question arises whether under these conditions there is any possibility of making methodical investigations. It is undeniable that this is regrettable, but I think if we treat each point cautiously and also take the renderings in the Greek manuscript tradition of the text into consideration, it will often be possible to overcome this want. Moreover, the conditions are not so unfavourable everywhere. In spite of the loss of the Greek original, part of our Syriac quotations can fortunately be compared with their original form in the Greek acts themselves. This is possible thanks to a special circumstance. At a synodical session at Ephesus Iôannes, the presbyter and first notary, read a letter from Bishop Theodoretos directed against Bishop Cyril and the oecumenical synod of Ephesus — a letter, about which the Synod was of unanimous opinion that it alone sufficed to suspend Bishop Theodoretos from office. And so this letter as a motive was added to the written decision about Theodoretos and here the reason is to be found for its having become an integral part of the synodical acts. Thus it is found together with the acts translated into Syriac⁴). Now by a most fortunate chance we find this Greek document in the collection of Theodoretos' letters⁵).

4) *ibid.* 136 sqq.

5) Migne, PG LXXXIII, 4, col. 1416 spp.

We are at least given the possibility of comparing a part of the Syriac quotations with the Greek original and here we again have the prospect of being able to rely especially on those quotations, in which the translator has given a contrary rendering to the Greek original in the Syriac form.

After these preliminary remarks we must consider whether in the light of our investigation the Syriac translation may suggest the type of the Syriac Gospel text with which the anonymous translator was familiar.

Examples will be able to prove this. The following passages contain points of special textual interest.

Perry 128, 5—7, Mt. XVIII, 16:

ܟܠܗ ܕܥܡܗ ܥܠ ܦܝܐ ܕܥܡܗ ܥܠ ܦܝܐ ܥܠ ܦܝܐ

"that on the mouth of two and three witnesses may stand every word." The Greek manuscripts have here ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων ἢ τριῶν and the rendering is exceedingly rare in which the Greek ἢ is substituted by the ܟܠ represented by I α¹⁶⁸ φ^{c. 1260. 1265} 6). Whether the quotation in the original acts was taken from an Hesychian or from a Byzantine text-type, the text of the lost original was invariably δύο... ἢ τριῶν.

This our Syriac quotation cannot be taken from the Peshitta, as in the latter we find:

ܥܠ ܦܝܐ ܕܥܡܗ ܥܠ ܦܝܐ

"of two or three."

So this particular periphrastic text of Mt. XVIII, 16 is neither the work of the translator nor is it derived from the Peshitta but must have been taken from the Gospel text familiar to the translator.

The old Syriac versions throw clear light on our variation. In both representatives of the Vetus Syra we find:

ܥܠ ܦܝܐ ܕܥܡܗ ܥܠ ܦܝܐ ܥܠ ܦܝܐ

"that on two and three witnesses' mouth may stand every word." Precisely the same rendering was also current in the Old Armenian Gospel texts. And this fact explains that the variation survived even in the Armenian text of Zohrabian:

զի ի բերանոց երկուց եւ յերեց վկայից

"then in the mouth of two and three witnesses". The same reading

6) Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments, hrsg. von Soden II, 66.

Lc. On the other hand our quotation is not taken from the Peshitta:

ܠܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ
ܠܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ

"but every one that shall speak against the Spirit of Holiness, it shall not be forgiven to him, not in this world and not in the world that is about to be."

The reading in Mc. III, 29 and in Lc. XII, 10 diverges from the setting of Mt., but a comparison of our quotation with the parallel readings is very significant, as it draws our attention to an important point. We learn from this comparison that the frame of our quotation is taken from Mt. which is richer here in detail than Mc. and Lc., but the verb of Mt. is substituted by the element of Mc. and Lc., quite unwarranted by the Greek manuscripts. Hereby our quotation reveals a harmonized pattern, an element characteristic of Tatian.

We have positive evidence of very weighty importance regarding the correctness of our observation. In fact in the Old Syriac Gospels Mt. XII, 32 has a harmonized form preserved even by both representatives of the Vetus Syra:

ܠܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ
ܠܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ ܕܥܠܡܐ

"but every-one that shall blaspheme against the Spirit of Holiness it shall not be forgiven to him, not in this world and not in the world that is about to be." The conformity between the Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin remains the only confirmation on Syriac ground that the text may have also been found in the Diatessaron. In Aphrahat the passage is lacking and the Armenian commentary of Ephrem has lost its harmonistic colour.

Further beautiful examples come from those Latin authors who have used the Itala-texts. "De Spirito Sancto" written by Ambrosius (Migne, PL XVII, 1012) and "Testimonia divinae Scripturae" of Isidorus of Sevilla (Migne, PL LXXXIII, 1203) have preserved something important for us:

Ambrosius
qui autem blasphemaverit in Spiritum sanctum, non remittetur ei neque in hoc saeculo, neque in futuro.

Vulgata
qui autem dixerit contra Spiritum sanctum, non remittetur ei, neque in hoc saeculo, neque in futuro.

There can be no doubt about the end of this passage occurring in the Diatessaron. This is one of the remarkable occasions when the Peshitta concurs with the Old Syriac versions reading contrary to the traditions of all the Greek manuscripts. By these witnesses 'âlmâ

= αἰῶν is reiterated. This detail must be looked upon as a trait of Tatian whose predilection for circumstantial contrasts is noticeable now and then in his style.

But although we know the ancient form of the second part of the quotation, confirmed by Syr-Cur, Syr-Sin and by the Peshitta, the question obtrudes itself whether the second part of our quotation can be explained as a translation from the Greek original? Did the translator only partially adhere to his own Gospel text and submit the remainder to the influence of the Greek original?

It is, however, not necessary to assume this. The rendering can be explained differently if we make a closer exploration of the readings of this passage in Old Syriac text-traditions apart from Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin. The Syriac Didascalia continually uses an Old Syriac text type and here the same rendering as in our quotation ¹¹⁾.

In both of these deviations we can attain ultimate certainty if we follow up the vestiges of our rendering in those regions which were immediately influenced by Old Syriac traditions. With what great faithfulness the Syriac readings were transferred to Armenian ground we can learn from Lazar of Pharb, a writer of the fifth century, who quoted from an Old Armenian Gospel type which had not had access to Greek texts. Lazar gives us a brilliant confirmation in his letter ¹²⁾:

որ հայհոյեցէ զհոգին սուրբ՝ մի թողցի նմա,
մի յայսմ աշխարհի եւ մի ի հանդերձեւումն :

"who shall blaspheme the Spirit of Holiness it shall not be forgiven to him, not in this world, and not in the future." This contrasts strongly with Zohrabian's text.

Apparently it is possible also to discern the vestiges of our reading elsewhere ¹³⁾.

Here again our search proves that the translator of the acts had a biblical text which was identical with Old Syriac and Old Armenian versions.

11) The didascalia apostolorum, ed. from a Mesopotamian ms. with various readings and collations of other mss. by M. D. Gibson, HS I (London 1903) 190.

12) *Patmowthium Hayoch*, ed. by Mkrtjean et Malxasean (Tiflis 1904) 191.

13) It is worthy of notice that one faint vestige also exists on Ethiopian ground, written in an apocryphal document with the title "Miracles of Jesus". Its quotations are very remarkable and suggest that they come from the vicinity of Tatian's sphere of influence. In our case we do not find a complete quotation but a paraphrastic rendering. Les miracles de Jésus, Texte éthiopien, éd. par S. Grébaut. Patrologia Orientalis XVII, 826.

ܕܗܡ ܠܐ ܕܠܐ ܡܢ ܕܠܐ ܠܐ ܡܢ ܕܠܐ ܠܐ

"all (things) are through Him and without Him not one (thing) was." This instance has a special charm for us because here we have the first opportunity of controlling our quotation by the Greek original. We read Theodoretos' letter not without surprise: πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν¹⁴). Herewith an instructive example is given us by which we can study the attitude of the translator towards the quotations in his Greek original. The passage from his own familiar Gospel text was too well-known to him and he preferred to give his own, notwithstanding that it does not coincide with the Greek form. He omits the last two words in the Greek quotation. This plus in Greek is no riddle to us. We know that it existed in the Koine, as well as in Cyril's Gospel text¹⁵) and in the majority of Greek manuscripts, except only very few codices which by the new punctuations have added the plus to the following verse. Also the Peshitta is a quite literal rendering of the Koine text and contains these two words. Consequently, we again have to do with a quotation which is neither translated from the Greek nor taken from the Peshitta, but evidently from a Gospel text in which stood the abridged form of John 1, 3.

Our variant only becomes clear when we seek for a solution in the Old Syriac traditions. Syr-Cur reads: "and without Him even not one (thing) was." In fact, our quotation which at first sight seemed to be an abridged reading, appears here in its ordinary form. Syr-Sin is missing here which loss is not irreparable. We even have a large number of other witnesses from the environs of the Old Syriac texts. The same phenomenon recurs in Rabbula's treatise¹⁶). There we also find a witness, speaking through the medium of the Arabic literature. Theodor Abu Qurra cites in the third mîmar of his treatise on the truth of Moses' legislation¹⁷): "all (things) are created by Him and by nobody else is anything created." Here the fact is important that the Arabic Gospel utilized by Theodor cannot have been translated from a Greek original but from a Syriac text and precisely — as closer examination reveals — from an Old Syriac model.

This rendering also existed in the Old Armenian Gospels prior to the revision by means of the Greek original. This abridged form appears in Armenian translations very frequently, but these must be

14) op. cit. Migne col. 1420 C.

15) Migne, PG LXXVI, col. 1152 B.

16) Acta martyrum et sanctorum, ed. Bedjan V, 646.

17) Les oeuvres arabes, ed. Bacha 38.

treated with great caution. Doubtless we can produce the Armenian translation of Cyril of Alexandria. In Scholia on the incarnation we read¹⁸⁾: "and without Him was not one (thing)", contrary to Zohrabian's text.

Our reading was known on Georgian ground too. There is a code in the convent of Schatberd which contains as an appendix to the writings of Hippolytos an anonymous treatise under his name. I regret that I have no possibility of examining the Georgian original text; I must content myself with the German translation given by N. Bonwetsch: „alles ward durch ihn geschaffen und ohne ihn ward nichts“¹⁹⁾.

According to this information the abridged reading of our quotation appears to be a notorious rendering both in the Old Syriac text-traditions and in the text-traditions in Armenia and Georgia which depend on it. Its oldest roots reach back to the Diatessaron. The testimony about it is preserved in the Western branch of the tradition of Diatessaron. Diatessaron in the Old Toscanian dialect reads: *tutte le cose sono fatte per lui, e niuna cosa è fatta senza lui*²⁰⁾, contrary to the Vulgate: *omnia per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nihil, quod factum est*. And Dutch Mediaeval Diatessaron presents: *alle dinc syn met din va warde ghemakt. en sonder dat en es nit ghemakt*²¹⁾, "all things have been made with that word, and without it nothing has been made." In the Syriac idiom we have this form in Ephrem who quotes it in his Commentary on Genesis²²⁾. Precisely the same form is quoted by the Liber Graduum²³⁾.

For the present we have put the question about the first part of our quotation aside: "all (things) are through Him", which stands with its slight inaccuracy nearer to the Peshitta rendering than to the rendering of Syr-Cur. Against that the Syr-Cur reads:

ܠܗܝܡ ܡܢ ܕܝܗܝܡ

"everything by Him was" in which the difference lies in a different Syriac preposition. Was the translator influenced by the rendering of the Peshitta here? But only superficial observation can find satisfaction in the testimony of Syr-Cur. Here closer investi-

18) The Armenian Version of Revelation and Cyril of Alexander's Scholia on the Incarnation, edited by F. C. Conybeare (London 1907) 100.

19) Die unter Hippolyts Namen überlieferte Schrift über den Glauben übers. von G. N. Bonwetsch (Leipzig 1907) 31.

20) Il Diatessaron in volgare italiano 203.

21) The Liège Diatessaron, ed. D. Plooij. Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen te Amsterdam. Afdeeling Letterkunde. Nieuwe Reeks, Deel XXIX, No. 1 (Amsterdam 1929) 5.

22) Opera omnia, Syriace I, 18 E.

23) ed. Kmosko, 917.

gation discovers a variety of renderings in the Old Syriac Gospel texts. To make this quite clear let me give some examples. In the Syriac fragments of Theodore of Mopsuestia, which texts derive from the surroundings of an Old Syriac Gospel, stands the same rendering²⁴). The rendering in Titus of Bostra also belongs to the same category²⁵). So the parallel reading in the Old Syriac text-traditions is confirmed by the best witnesses. This rendering has rivalled with the other reading represented by Syr-Cur, by Syriac Theophania²⁶) and by the translation of Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History²⁷).

Perry 142, 9—10; Jn. I, 9:

ܝܡܢܐ ܕܝܠܝܢ ܕܝܡܢܐ ܡܢܬܝܢ
ܕܠܠܐ ܕܠܠܐ ܕܠܠܐ

"He is the true light which lightens every man that comes into the world." This question, too, has a special attraction for us because of the possibility of a comparison with the Greek original. Theodoretos' letter gives the text as follows: ἦν τὸ φῶς τὸ ἀληθινόν, ὃ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον²⁸). The discrepancy between the Syriac and Greek readings lies in the tense. The peculiarity of our quotation is particularly remarkable if we remember that in the entire tradition of Greek manuscripts this variant is absolutely unknown.

On the other hand our quotation cannot be taken from the Peshitta which renders:

ܕܝܠܝܢ ܕܝܡܢܐ ܝܠܕ ܕܡܢ ܡܢܬܝܢ
ܕܠܠܐ ܕܠܠܐ ܕܠܠܐ ܝܡܢܐ

"for He was the light of the truth which lightens every man that comes into the world." In no manuscript of Peshitta is an exception to be found. Comparing the Peshitta with our text the difference appears in the tense, associated with the second discrepancy displayed by *shrârâ* "truth" instead of the adjective *sharîrâ*.

The new variation remains completely enigmatical if we seek for a solution in the Greek manuscripts. Indeed, at first sight this looks

24) Theodori Mopsuesteni fragmenta syriaca, ed. E. Sachau (Lipsiae 1869) 25.

25) Contra manichaeos, ed. de Lagarde 154.

26) On the Theophania, ed. Lee I, 24.

27) The Ecclesiastical History in Syriac, ed. by W. Wright and N. McLean (Cambridge 1898) 8.

28) op. cit. Migne, col. 1420 C.

like a mistake. On account of its recurrence in an Old Latin manuscript, Professor von Soden is of the opinion that here we have to deal with a mistake which makes a correction inevitable²⁹).

But the case becomes essentially different when we continue our search for enlightenment by means of the archaic text-traditions in the Orient.

Both the Oriental and the Western branch of the Diatessaron tradition are able to offer us good material for this purpose, which is very welcome as an explanation of our textual problem. We first meet with an exceptional case of the Arabic Diatessaron maintaining its peculiar reading in John 1,9 contrary to the Peshitta³⁰):

الذى هو نور الحق
المنير لكل انسان ات الى العالم

"for He is the light of the truth which lightens every man who comes into the world." Here we actually find the present tense in a relative sentence. The second witness comes from very far. The Mediaeval Dutch Diatessaron has preserved: *dat licht es dat gewarege licht dat wer clert elkenmensche die in dese werelt lyf ontfeet*³¹) "that light is the true light which enlightens every man who receives life in this world." Here, again, we meet with the remarkable reading in Tatian's Harmony.

This variant of Tatian's was handed over into the Old Syriac Gospel text. Syr-Cur reads:

ܡܕܘܢܐ ܕܡܕܘܢܐ ܕܡܕܘܢܐ ܕܡܕܘܢܐ

"but He is the light of the truth." The passage in Syr-Sin is lost. But this peculiarity has survived in the Gospel text on which is based the Arabic translation of cod. arab. Vindobonensis 43 which contained our variant accompanied by many other archaic peculiarities³²):

الذى هو نور الحق الذى يضى
لكل انسان ات على العالم

"for He is the light of truth which illuminates every man that comes into the world." This reading does not conform with the usual Arabic rendering.

29) „Joh. 1,1 a. 2. 4. 9. 10, bietet „erat“ (denn so ist gewiß 1,9 statt „est“ zu lesen)“. Hans von Soden. Das lateinische Neue Testament in Afrika zur Zeit Cyprians (Leipzig 1909) 158.

30) Tatiani evangeliorum harmoniae arabice, ed. Ciasca 13.

31) The Liège Diatessaron, ed. Plooij (Amsterdam 1929) 39.

32) Die vier Evangelien arabisch, hrsg. P.de Lagarde (Leipzig 1864) 109.

Apart from the Old Syriac and Old Arabic traditions, our variant seems to appear very rarely. On Latin ground the codex Palatinus presents the only case which offers this way of reading:

Codex Palatinus	Vulgate
est lumen verum, quod inluminat omnem hominem	erat lux vera, quae illuminat omnem hominem

Closer investigation of Latin patristic literary monuments enlarges the bulk of the most cogent proofs. Here the cod. e is no exception. How often the Latin Fathers used this particular form of this passage we learn from several authors' works. "Explanatio Psalmorum XII" written by Ambrosius (ed. Petschenig, Vindobonae 1919, 168), "Tractatus super Psalmos" written by Hilarius of Poitiers (ed. Zingerle, Vindobonae 1891, 661 sq.), "De luminibus", written by Rufinus of Aquileja (ed. Engelbrecht, Vindobonae 1910, 111) and "Enarratio in Psalmum XXV" written by Augustinus (Migne, PL XXXVI, 193) render us service.

Ambr.	Hilar.
verum lumen est verbum quod totum inluminat mundum.	est enim lux vera, quae luci- ficat omnem hominem.

The only other authority for this reading, as far as I know, derives from Ethiopian sources. This is surprising, but the rendering of Tatian emerges even in the Ethiopian version, connected with many insoluble problems³³):

ዘውእቱ፡ ብርሃኑ፡ ጽድቅ ።

"He is the light of the justice." Several ways of elucidating the inroad of Tatian's readings into the Ethiopian version stand open to us. In spite of the majority of scholars since Dillmann sharing the standpoint that the Ethiopian version is based on the Greek codices, the possibility of the Ethiopian text having adopted some infiltrations must be taken into consideration.

Finally the other peculiarity demands a short halt. This is *sharîrâ* = "true" in our quotation. This coincidence with the Greek cannot be explained merely by the influence of the Greek original on the translator, despite the fact that the Syr-Cur reads here *shrârâ* = "truth". Here it is worthy of mention that the *sharîrâ* also existed as a widely known reading in the Old Syriac text traditions warranted by several authorities. We find it in the Syriac homilies of Gregory

³³) ed. by Pell Platt-Prätorius (Lipsiae 1899).

Thaumaturgos³⁴) accompanied by a series of other old Syriac variations. And even in Ephrem's Paraenetica XL it recurs twice³⁵).

Now we can leave our quotation with complete satisfaction. We have established the fact that this is not a mistake caused by a writer but in reality a once widely known reading which in its essential point has given us the possibility of becoming acquainted with a pure and remarkable metaphrasis of Tatian's. There is also no question of a mistake in codex Palatinus, the rendering of which is one of the numerous traces of a very early bifurcation of the Old Syro-Latin. Our discovery throws a clear light on the question about the familiar Gospel text used by the translator.

Perry 147, 25—27, Jn. X, 18:

ܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ
ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ ܕܢܬܬܐܢܐ

"I am mighty to lay down my soul and I am mighty to take it again. No man takes it from me." First we can establish the fact that our quotation is not a translation from the Greek text. The letter of Theodoretos gives a clear evidence³⁶). A comparison shows that the translator has here regarded the transposition in the long quotation made by Theodoretos. But in spite of this the Syriac text in our quotation is not a translation. The word αἶρει is not translated into Syriac but substituted by a new word *nsab* = "to take". Contrarily αἶρει is constant in all the Greek manuscripts and the only deviation is the form ἦρεν presented by papyri 45, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus.

It is evident that the translator must have had reasons of his own for overlooking the Greek form and introducing a correction. His reasons are clear to us: this is a reading contained in his familiar Gospel text. This text was not the Peshitta which as usual renders αἶρει literally by *shqal*. The Harclensian version also reads similarly. These observations put our quotation in a singular light which incites us to solve its riddle.

In our investigation of this variant the experience we have so often had is reiterated. If we seek the solution of our quotation by means of the tradition of the Greek manuscripts or from the Peshitta, we get no answer. But if we investigate the old Syriac text-traditions, the singular readings and variations find their ultimate solution.

In this case we have no luck with the representatives of Vetus Syra. Syr-Cur has a gap here and Syr-Sin is accommodated to the

34) *Analecta sacra spicilegio solesmensi parata*, ed. J. B. Pitra, IV (Parisiis 1883) 130.

35) *Opera omnia*, Syriace III, 498.

36) *op. cit.* Migne col. 1424 D.

Peshitta. Aphrahat and Ephrem too, are of no account. But the same peculiar rendering recurs in Syriac Theophania³⁷):

ܠܐ ܢܫܐ ܠܝ ܢܦܫܐ ܕܝܗܝ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ ܕܡܢ

"that no man takes my soul from me." The existence of "nsab" is affirmed as a reading of an Old Syriac Gospel. I have not met with this text so fully cited in ancient Syriac patristic literature. But in spite of that this is not the only evidence. An independent testimony recurs in Armenian dress. By a happy chance the same archaic variation has been preserved in an Armenian source which took it from an Old Armenian Gospel. Severianus of Gabala, the famous preacher, whose homilies were still translated into Armenian in the fifth century, gives us brilliant evidence in verbal coincidence. The homily about the Words of Our Lord in Gethsemane contains the quotation which he introduces with "He says" or "it says", the formula with which Armenian Fathers usually introduced a quotation from Scripture. The passage runs thus³⁸):

ոչ ոք առնու ասէ զոգի իմ յինէն իշխանութիւն
ու՛նիմ ես գնեւ զոգի իմ, եւ իշխանութիւն ու-
նիմ միւսանդամ առնուլ գնա

"not anyone takes, He says, my soul from me. I have the might to lay down my soul and I have the might to take it again." Zohrabian's text reads here:

ոչ ոք հանէ զնա յինէն

"no one bears it from me" etc. The fact of finding our variant here is not surprising, for in the translation of the homilies the quotations are not translated but taken from an old Armenian Gospel and intercalated into the text.

Together with the Syriac Theophania the new witness attests the existence of an old reading also familiar to our translator. We cannot explain the verbal coincidence except by supposing them to be quoted from a common archaic text-type.

Perry 141, 18—20, Jn. II, 19:

Կենդանի եմ ձեռնով ձեռքիս
ով եւ իմ իշխանութիւն

37) On the Theophania ed. Lee III, 43.

38) Severiani sive Seberiani Gabalorum episcopi Emiesensis Homiliae. ed. I. B. Aucher (Venetijs 1828) 350.

"lose this temple and in three days I raise it up." The Greek original of Jn. II, 19 in Theodoretos' letter³⁹⁾ is rendered in Syriac quite literally. On proceeding from the Greek text we cannot observe anything worthy of mention, but let us look at this quotation from a different point of view and try whether our rendering might then be made to reveal something. Although its witness may not possess independent value and it alone does not lead us much further than a modest degree of probability, seen from the background of the observations we have made, its testimony is not to be overlooked. In doing this, one example from analogical passages at all events is introduced.

We have all made the experience often enough to what extent the wording, even in an exact translation, may depend on the biblical text familiar to the translator. This observation is not unimportant. We have only to pay attention to how the wellknown passages have run into the translator's pen and how he can hardly conceal the character of his own familiar Gospel text.

In this quotation of Jn. II, 19 we can certainly assume that our translator was familiar with it. Provided that our assumption is trustworthy, we can make an experiment and observe how the Syriac form of the Greek λύσατε runs into his pen. He uses the verbe *shrâ*. This justifies our opinion that this Biblical passage was familiar to him in a form which was not taken from the Peshitta. Here without exception all the manuscripts of the Peshitta use the verb *sthar* = "destroy" which rendering has its equivalent in the Greek καταλύσατε⁴⁰⁾.

The old Syriac representatives give us no enlightenment. In Syr-Cur there is a gap and Syr-Sin uses the verb of the Peshitta. But we do not remain without a positive answer on consulting the Arabic Diatessaron⁴¹⁾:

انقضوا هذا الهيكل

"lose (destroy) this temple." We must however admit that the Arabic expression can signify *shrâ* as well as *sthar*, but I think the Arabic translator did not read *sthar* in his Syriac text, for in this case he would have rendered the word with the exact Arabic equivalent *satara* = *sthar*⁴²⁾.

39) op. cit. Migne col. 1428 A; 1433 D.

40) Payne Smith, Thesaurus Syriacus col. 2756.

41) Tatiani evangeliorum harmoniae arabice, ed. Ciasca 121.

42) Lexicon syriacum auctore Hassano bar Bahlule, ed. R. Duval, II (Parisiis 1901) 1395.

We can attain ultimate clearness through Aphrahat and Ephrem. Aphrahat brings the passage in the form of a periphrastic text⁴³):

ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ
ܡܠܟܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ ܕܥܡܪܐ

"if you lose it, this temple which you see, in three days I will raise it up". The passage in Ephrem, Sermo VI in hebdomadam sanctam also has a paraphrastic form, but it shows that the same rendering was familiar to Ephrem⁴⁴).

This reading attested by Aphrahat and Ephrem very often recurs in the later Syriac patristic literature. We learn now that this fact cannot be explained by the Harklean Version alone⁴⁵).

The example which speaks in the name of others again helps us to judge how general the influence of an Old Syriac version was upon the anonymous translator of the acts.

We can bring our investigation to an end. Our source is far from being exhausted, but this series of more closely examined passages has furnished us with valuable material, the testimony of which is clear enough to summarize our results.

The perusal of these puzzling passages did not find a solution through the Greek text-traditions. The solution does not lie on the surface of our document. A closer investigation was indispensable in order to penetrate to its deep-lying secret.

We first met with a row of quotations in which the Syriac form does not coincide with the Greek original. Here we are confronted with quotations in which the exactness of the translation is sacrificed to the biblical text familiar to the writer. And furnished with valuable evidence derived from Old Syriac and Old Armenian literature which have preserved the remains of archaic Gospels, we have learned to regard our passages in a different light. Here we are absolutely certain to have met with a text taken from the translator's own Gospel text. Whenever he makes a quotation, he cites it in the form familiar to him from his own Gospel for which he has more reverence than for a translation from the Greek.

Besides those quotations displaying discrepancies with the Greek original, our document presents a row of other quotations which coincide with the Greek original. It is not a hopeless undertaking to make some observations about the Gospel-text with which the translator was familiar.

43) *Demonstrationes*, ed. Parisot I, 524.

44) *Hymni et sermones*, ed. Lamy I, 471.

45) *Brit. Mus. Add.* 7164, fol. 148 b.

Now we can consult the witnesses about the definite decision. Both groups prove concordantly that the Gospel text used by the translator was in no case the Peshitta.

Our investigations have on the contrary disclosed an intimate connection between our quotations and the textual traditions of Old Syriac Gospels. The variations, corrections and special renderings of our quotations are to be found in ancient patristic literature in which an ancient but lost type of Gospel is used. We have found, moreover, many of these discrepant texts given identically or with slight inaccuracies by two or more writers who wrote in different places, times and languages. Hereby light is thrown on an intimate connection between our quotations and the textual traditions of Old Syriac Gospels.

Whenever we look into the Syriac translation of the synodical acts we see everywhere the glittering fragments of a peculiar and exotic type and foreign pattern. About a text which is abounding with such elements it is impossible to make a less far-reaching decision than this: the Gospel text in the hands of the anonymous translator was evidently an Old Syriac Gospel text.

V. The Gospel Text Used by the Disciples of the Theological School of Edessa.

There is a possibility of making still further inroads into the textual milieu of the Mesopotamian metropolis from another point of access. Here we have the outlook of approaching a spiritual centre of the greatest importance, namely the Theological School of Edessa. It would be very valuable for us to learn something about the textual traditions of this school. There is no doubt that in this way a real service could be rendered to the history of the text of the New Testament, but there is no possibility of seeing directly which kind of text was used there. We have, however, the possibility of making some indirect observations on this question. It would be very profitable to examine the textual customs and idiosyncrasies of the disciples who had completed their studies at the School of Edessa, for one naturally assumes that they as learned men had appropriated the textual traditions of this school. And thus they afford us the possibility of gleaning indirect information about the textual traditions familiar to this theological centre.

1. Philoxenus of Mabbôg.

Philoxenus, the metropolitan of Mabbôg, consecrated by Petrus Fullo in the year 485, is a well-known name in Syrian ecclesiastical history. He was a renowned champion of the monophysitic movement and died for his belief as a martyr. At the same time Philoxenus is one of the most important and estimated Syriac authors. Budge compiled a list of his writings, the manuscripts of which have survived and are scattered in various libraries in London, Paris, Rome, and Oxford. This list contains about 80 of his works¹). His entire literary production is written in prose of the most elegant style. The Arabic and Ethiopian translations prove that his writings also exercised attraction on wider circles than his own Syriac ones.

This remarkable man's life is sketched in two very short Syriac texts of anonymous origin²). We learn from them that Philoxenus studied together with his brother at Edessa and was intimately connected with the Theological School of Edessa³). If we take the data

1) Philoxenus, Bishop of Mabbogh, *The Discourses*, ed. by E. A. W. Budge II (London 1894) XLVIII sqq.

2) *Chronicon ad annum Dom. 846 pert. Chronica minora*, ed. E. W. Brooks. *Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium. Scriptores Syri*, Series III, tom. 4 (Paris 1904) 220 sqq. *Notice inédite sur Philoxène évêque de Maboug*. éd. par. F. Nau. *Revue de L'Orient Chrétien* VIII (Paris 1903) 630 sqq.

3) *ibid.* 631.

presented by Shemon of Arsham⁴⁾ into consideration, his sojourn at Edessa might have been during Hîbâ's episcopacy. According to this chronology he was born about the year 430. In this case he had the possibility of attending the Persian School during the last years of its existence. As we know, the Persian School at Edessa was liquidated in the year 457. But it is not absolutely improbable that Philoxenus later attended the Theological School.

It would be very interesting to learn something about the textual influences to which Philoxenus was subject. We shall now subject some of his writings to investigation; a few examples will suffice, for, as we shall see, even these few samples are capable of convincing us what pearls are hidden in these texts.

At first we shall consult an ascetical work which was probably written during his quiet years, i. e. before the year 498, when he plunged into dogmatic clashes. As is well known, Budge was of opinion that Philoxenus had used the text of the Peshitta here⁵⁾. Zuntz presented the same view recently⁶⁾. But let us take our information as to which text was in reality his own Gospel text from immediate sources.

Discourses, Vol. I, page 225 contains Mt. VI, 24 as follows:

ܠܐ ܬܫܥܒ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܡܝܢ ܕܡܠܟܐ ܕܝܡܝܢ

"you cannot serve two masters". This reading cannot be taken from the Peshitta, for the Peshitta renders the Greek original correctly. But Philoxenus' reading presents a remarkable deviation: the whole quotation is transposed into the second person plural which is absolutely unknown in the entire Greek manuscript tradition. In spite of this our quotation cannot be a loose quotation, for it is intended to be a strict quotation, being introduced by the characteristic "I am". But what is more important is that the remarkable form of our quotation is a wide-spread one in documents influenced by Old Syriac text traditions. We meet with the same rendering in the Syriac Acts of the Persian Martyrs⁷⁾. Again the same characteristic form of our quotation, but treated more freely, is preserved by a *mêmra*, which has survived under Ishaq's name⁸⁾. The Armenian literature also furnishes us with brilliant material. Its intimate connection with

4) Bibliotheca orientalis I, 352 sq.

5) "...but if we may judge from the fact that all the quotations are taken from the Peshitta it must have been before he published his translation of the Bible at Mabbogh in 508." The Discourses II, LXXIII.

6) The Ancestry of the Harklean New Testament (London 1945) 40.

7) See my Die Evangelienzitate in der Einleitung in die syrischen Märtyrerakten, cf. Acta martyrum et sanctorum ed. Bedjan II, 66.

8) Homiliae S. Isaaci Syri Antiocheni, ed. P. Bedjan I (Paris 1903) 21.

the Old Syriac Gospel text traditions makes its testimony welcome to us. The Armenian translation of John Chrysostomos' homilies gives in the XXI homily about Matth.⁹⁾ the following text:

եւ ապա ասէ, եթէ ոչ կարէք
դուք երկուց տերանց ծառայել

"and then He says that you cannot serve two masters." The Armenian homilies written by Severian of Gabbala present us with the same peculiar rendering¹⁰⁾.

Our result is seconded by some valuable witnesses from Old Latin ground. There is no Itala-manuscript which has preserved this rendering, but patristic evidence surpasses our hopes. A number of authors quote the peculiar form.

We read in "De anima" written by Tertullianus (ed. Oehler, Lipsiae 1854, II, 579):

Tertull.

Vulgata.

non potestis duobus dominis ser-
vire.

nemo potest duobus dominis ser-
vire.

The same particular form has survived in several literary monuments. "Epistula XVII" of Ambrosius (Migne, PL XVI, 964), "De moribus ecclesiae" written by Augustinus (Migne, PL XXXII, 1330), „Epistula XXIV" written by Paulinus of Nola (ed. Hartel, Vindobonae 1894, 212, 225) have preserved this textual idiosyncrasy.

The existence of a special and archaic variation is proved by this. There is no doubt that this rendering was familiar to the Old Syriac Gospel sphere in spite of both representatives of Vetus Syra not being able to demonstrate it.

But where can its origin have been? The grammatical conformity in both parts of Mt. VI, 24 seems to give us a hint that here we are dealing with a distinct stylistic polish. It suggests that Tatian's style and taste must have been taken into consideration.

But investigation proves that the tradition of the Diatessaron in its various branches is unluckily only able to offer us one distant witness. — This witness is a Spanish Christian, Ishaq Velasquez, who completed his Arabic Gospel translation in the year 946¹¹⁾.

In spite of occasional retouches this Arabic text has preserved sparse but valuable vestiges:

١٥٣١ ١٥٣٢ ١٥٣٣ ١٥٣٤ ١٥٣٥

"known that not one can..." It is obvious that in this type of render-

9) *Yawetaranagirn Matthêos* 334 sq.

10) *Homiliae*, ed. Aucher 162.

11) *codex arab. Monachensis* 238.

ing the primitive and the retouched elements overlap. This remarkable exhortation "know" seems to indicate that the original text contained a form of second person plural.

The following passages from the Discourses contain points of textual interest. Here Vol. I, page 270 we find Mt. XI, 28:

ܠܕܝܡܐ ܠܠܝܐܢ ܕܝܥܪܐ

"bearers of heavy burdens." Philoxenus must have used a different Gospel-text from that of the Peshitta. Obviously the problem of the passage lies in the word *jaqîrthâ* = "heavy" which is unwarranted by the Greek. Here we have a peculiar rendering with a characteristic pleonasm which does not stand in any canonical Gospel text. Is it only a gloss? But we give up every attempt at explaining this rendering by looking upon it as a liberty once we have become acquainted with a similar reading in the oldest Syriac literature, namely the Syriac acts of Judas Thomas¹²), the Syriac translation of Didache¹³), the Syriac translation of John Chrysostomos' homilies¹⁴). We have moreover the same phenomenon in old Armenian literature. Here Lazar of Pharb reads¹⁵):

եւ որք ունիք զբեռինս ծանուհս

"and those of you who bear heavy burdens." Precisely the same peculiar rendering is preserved by Agathangelus¹⁶), by the Armenian translation of Aphrahat's homilies¹⁷) and by Ephrem's Armenian Commentary¹⁸).

When we proceed with our inquiry into the origin of this peculiar rendering, the text of Syr-Cur offers us the enlightenment we require. Indeed the passage of Mt. XI, 28 is given here in exactly the same wording as in Philoxenus' quotation. Here, again, we recognize an Old Syriac Gospel rendering. It certainly originated from Tatian's work, for the rendering with the characteristic pleonasm is to be found in the Diatessaron-text used by Ephrem¹⁹) and by Liber Graduum²⁰), although these contain more reminiscences than a fully cited text.

12) Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, ed. W. Wright, I (London 1871) 252.

13) The didascalia apostolorum, ed. M. D. Gibson fol. 5a; 35b; 70b; 73b.

14) Quatre homélies de S. Jean Chrysostome, éd. par F. Nau, PO XIII (Paris 1919) 114 sq.

15) *Patmowthiwn Hayoch*, ed. *Ter-Mkrthjean* and *Malxasean* 199.

16) *Patmagirkh Hayoch*, ed. *Malxasean* 221.

17) Sermones, ed. Antonelli 335.

18) *Srbòyn Ephremi matenagrowthiwnkh* 117.

19) Opera omnia, Syriace III, 372 B.

20) ed. Kmosko 465.

ਕਮਿਲ ਜਕਰ

"which goes into the stomach". The Peshitta conforms quite literally to the Greek original and renders "into mouth". But at any rate Philoxenus' rendering is his own free version, for we find this discrepant text, too, in this identical form in the works of several writers who wrote in various places and at different times. It is contained in Liber Graduum²¹). On Armenian ground Eznik displays this rendering²²):

որ մասնիցէ յորովայն մարդոյ

"which goes into the stomach of a human being". And even on Arabic ground the same peculiar reading is to be found, obviously derived from a translation made from the Syriac²³). The only explanation for this coincidence between Philoxenus and other writers is that they are quoting from a common archaic Gospel-text.

The value of the testimony of the Discourses is not limited to these few examples. About 40 quotations are to be found and a quarter of them contain Old Syriac elements which have survived in Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin and where Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin leave us in the lurch, we find some discrepant texts identically rendered by Syriac, Armenian, Arabic and Coptic writers, whose texts never underwent careful revision.

We shall now take a further example. *Tractatus de trinitate et incarnatione*²⁴⁾ contains the passage from Mt. XI, 27:

וְלֹא אֶתְּנֶה לְבָנִי לְאִשְׁתּוֹ
וְלֹא אֶתְּנֶה לְאִשְׁתּוֹ

"no man knows the Father but the Son, neither the Son but the Father." This is not a reading of the Peshitta in which the order Father-Son is reversed according to the Greek original. At first sight it makes the impression of a vagary, and when Burkitt meets with this rendering in Ephrem, he remarks: "this does not agree exactly with any Syriac Biblical text, but Ephraim probably cited it loosely"²⁵).

This explanation, however, is unsatisfactory on account of the frequency of this rendering in the current Old Syriac Gospel-texts. Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin have, it is true, not preserved anything worthy

21) *ibid.* 261.

22) *Elc alandoch* (Wenetik 1875) 283.

23) Book of Homilies, ed. H. Tattam (London 1846) 305.

24) Tractatus de trinitate et incarnatione, ed. A. Vaschalde. CSCO, Scriptores Syri. Series II, tom. 27 (Parisii 1907) 84, 246 cf. 25.

25) Ephraim's Prose Refutations II, 72.

of mention; but we meet with the same peculiar order of words in the Syriac translation of Eusebios' Ecclesiastical history²⁶), as well in other places²⁷). On Armenian ground it recurs in Gregor Lusawor²⁸), Agathangelus²⁹), Severus of Gabala³⁰) and in John Chrysostomos' Armenian homilies³¹). It is a well-known fact that all four are closely connected with Old Syriac text-traditions. It is evident that the form Mt. XI, 27 in Philoxenus is precisely the form generally used in Old Syriac Gospels.

What is the origin of this reversed form? Here the tradition of Diatessaron has preserved one instructive vestige. The Diatessaron Veneto reads: *et nesuno cognosse Dio Pare se non lo Fiolo, e lo Fiolo negun cognosce se no lo Pare*³²). Now we understand why Ephrem uses Mt. XI, 27 in a reversed form.

Apart from this example, the present treatise contains a long series of renderings which clearly reveal Old Syriac features.

Subsequently we examine Philoxenus' letter addressed to the monks of Tell 'Adda. I can agree neither with Guidi's opinion that this letter contains the Philoxean text, nor with the view presented by Zuntz³³) that the quotations are taken from the Peshitta. Most of the quotations presented here concur with Old Syriac renderings. Among them Mt. X, 32 is of textual interest³⁴):

ܐܢܬܐ ܕܢܝܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܢܝܢܐ ܕܢܝܢܐ ܕܢܝܢܐ
ܐܢܬܐ ܕܢܝܢܐ ܕܡܢ ܕܢܝܢܐ ܕܢܝܢܐ ܕܢܝܢܐ

"Whosoever shall confess me before men, I will confess him before the Father and before the angels" While on the one hand the quotation is not taken from the Peshitta, which is verbal to the Greek original, i. e. without the addition "and before the angels", on the other hand careful study of the oldest Syriac patristic literature rewards us with authentic vestiges. In fact, among the oldest writers, Mt. X, 32 was current in this exact form. We can find it in the acts of Berîkîshô³⁵)

26) ed. Wright and McLean 7.

27) *Analecta sacra spicilegio solesmensi parata*, ed. Pitra IV, 22.

28) *Charkh* (Wenetik 1838) 22.

29) *Patmagirk Hayoch*, ed. *Malxaseân* 210.

30) *Homiliae*, ed. Aucher 206.

31) *Meknowthiwn Esayeay* (Wenetik 1880) 260.

32) *Il Diatessaron in volgare italiano* 63; cf. the Greek text used by Justin: *Dialogus cum Tryphone Judaeo*, Migne, PG VI, col. 700; *Apologia I pro Christianis*, *ibid.* col. 424, 425.

33) *The Ancestry of the Hariklean New Testament* 41.

34) *La lettera di Filosseno ai monaci di Tell 'Addâ*, ed. I. Guidi, *Rendiconti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei* XII (Roma 1884) 48.

35) *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, ed. Bedjan II, 43.

‘Azzîzâ’îl³⁶), Guria and Shamona³⁷); the textual peculiarity of the last mentioned document is passed on to the Greek translation collected by Metaphrast³⁸) and to the Armenian version as well³⁹). The same peculiar rendering is also noticeable in Coptic documents. It is to be found in the Coptic Curzon Catena⁴⁰) and in the Coptic acts of John and Semon⁴¹). And even on Ethiopian ground it is not unknown. In a document, "The Miracles of Jesus", in which a particular Gospel text displaying Tatian's influence is used, the same form appears⁴²).

The comparison of a parallel passage in Lc. XII, 8 makes it clear that here the passage from Matthew is combined with an element taken from Lc. XII, 8: ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ἀγγέλων τοῦ θεοῦ. Consequently we have to do with a harmonized text which must necessarily have had its origin in Tatian. This is not a mere supposition. Several branches of the tradition of Diatessaron furnish us with cogent evidence. Codex Fuldensis reads: confitebor et ego eum coram Patre meo, qui in coelis est, et coram angelis eius⁴³); cf. Diatessaron Toscano: confesserò lui dinanzi al Padre mio ch'è ne' cieli e dinanzi agli angeli suoi⁴⁴); cf. The Liège Diatessaron: *des ghens salic lyen vor mynen vader die in de hemele en vor sine ingele*⁴⁵) (him will I confess before my Father who is in heaven, and before his angels).

I have not met with this harmonistic text elsewhere in Latin patristic literature, except in "Enarratio in Psalmum CXVI" written by Augustinus (Migne, PL XXXVI, 1492):

Augustinus

qui me confessus fuerit coram
hominibus, confitebor eum coram
Angelis Dei.

Vulgata

confitebor et ego eum coram
Patre meo qui in caëlis est.

We bring our observations to an end by treating a letter addressed to an abbot. This letter exists in a manuscript at Cambridge Add.

36) Histoire de St. Azazaël, éd. par F. Macler. Bibliothèque de L'Ecole des Hautes Etudes CXXI (Paris 1902) 10.

37) Acta Sancti Guriae et Shamoniae, ed. I. Ephraem Rahmani (Romae 1899) 7.

38) Migne, PG CXVI, col. 131.

39) *Warkh ew wkayabanowthiwnkh srboch* I (Wenetik 1874) 274.

40) Catenae in evangelia aegyptiacae quae supersunt, ed. P. de Lagarde (Gottingae 1886) 146.

41) Les Actes des Martyrs de L'Egypte, éd. par H. Hyvernat I (Paris 1886) 196.

42) Les Miracles de Jésus, ed. Grébaut. PO XVII, 826.

43) Codex Fuldensis, ed. E. Ranke (Marburgi et Lipsiae 1868) 81.

44) Diatessaron in volgare italiano 233.

45) The Liège Diatessaron, ed. D. Plooij 96.

1999⁴⁶). Almost the whole series of quotations evinces the characteristic physiognomy of Old Syriac texts. The following passage of Mt. XIX, 21 is of textual interest and importance⁴⁷):

ܐܝܬܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ
ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ
ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ ܕܝܠܕܝܢ

"if thou wilt be perfect, go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and take thy cross and come after me." The Gospel text used here is not that of the Peshitta, which renders the Greek text correctly.

So the Syriac form with its various peculiarities is not to be found in any canonical Gospel-text. We cannot possibly look upon this phrase as an improvisation of Philoxenus, for its stereotype character is warranted. This rendering recurs in the Narratives of Holy Women⁴⁸). These adopt the same elements and combine them with Mt. XIX, 21 precisely in the same order. Moreover, both the Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin show that we are now in the Old Syriac domain. Syr-Cur presents one peculiarity and Syr-Sin a second, but their united testimony is perfect.

The structure of our quotation is very interesting and is worthy of analysis. If we compare it with the Greek original, it becomes evident that it contains two remarkable additions to Matthew's manner of reading. The first addition is explained by the parallel-passage Lc. XVIII, 22 πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις; the second one is an element from Mt. XVI, 24 b = Mc. VIII, 34 b (Lc. IX, 23) which is incorporated into the Lord's word to the rich young man. Thanks to this enlightenment, we can characterize our quotation as harmonized text-mosaic. We cannot fail to recognize typical traits of Tatian's work. The tradition of the Diatessaron makes things entirely clear. The first addition is warranted by the Diatessaron Veneto: se tu voi esser perfetto, va e vende tuto quello che tu ài⁴⁹), compare the Old Latin manuscripts f and ff²: vade et vende omnia quae possides⁵⁰), but the most striking testimony is afforded by the Arabic Diatessaron⁵¹).

46) cf. A Catalogue of the Syriac MSS, W. Wright and St. A. Cook (Cambridge 1901).

47) fol. 132 b.

48) Select Narratives of Holy Women from the Syro-Antiochian or Sinai Palimpsest, ed. by A. Smith Lewis. Studia Sinaitica IX (London 1900) fol. 86 a.

49) Il Diatessaron in volgare italiano 86.

50) Itala. ed. Jülicher I, 137.

51) Tatiani evangeliorum harmoniae arabice 110.

إن اشرت ان تكون كاملا فالذي يعوزك واحد انطلق فبع كل
شي لك واعط المساكين ويكون لك ذخيرة في السما وخذ
صليبك واتبعني

"if thou wilt be perfect... go sell all that thou hast and give to the poor and thou shalt have a treasure in heaven and take thy cross and follow me." For, as the Peshitta does not contain these additions, it is evident that the Arabic has preserved the actual reading of the Diatessaron. The same remarkable structure of this passage in Diatessaron is warranted by Liber Graduum⁵²). It is not particularly unfortunate that the text is given as a periphrastic form, for in spite of this all the peculiarities are intact. We have moreover the same phenomenon in Christian Arabic literature. It is preserved by Abu Qurra⁵³).

It is interesting to observe this textual connection also in the Itala-texts although not directly but once used and quoted by patristic authors. "Contra Adimantum" written by Augustinus (Migne, PL XLII, 166), "Concordia regularum" written by Benedictus of Aniane (Migne, PL CIII 1271) and "Vita S. Melaniae Junioris" (Analecta Bollandiana 1889, 27) display the following quotation: Si vis perfectus esse, vende omnia quaecumque possides, et divide pauperibus, et tolle crucem tuam et sequere me (Aug.).

It is not necessary for us to continue our investigations here. What we have examined has been highly instructive and sufficient for our purpose. The Peshitta was by no means the Gospel with which Philoxenus was familiar. These few examples show us what textual pearls are to be found in the literary legacy of Philoxenus. Provisionally we can be satisfied with these examples if we bear in mind that these quotations are not trifles but the best-known passages of the New Testament. Our recent observations have enabled us to establish a literary connection with an older text-type which never underwent any careful revision. In spite of the fact that some problems⁵⁴) of Philoxenus' Gospel text still remain to be solved — may be that later the new revision made by Polycarp has interflowed into it — but whoever examines the remains of his Gospel text can easily convince himself that the Old Syriac Gospel text traditions had had a decisive influence upon this famous Syriac writer.

52) ed. Kmosko 56 sq.

53) Traité inédit de Théodore Abou Qurra évêque Melchite de Harran, sur l'Existence de Dieu et la Vraie Religion, éd. par L. Cheikho (Beyrouth 1912) 24.

54) A revised text of John is used in the MS Br. Mus. Add. 14, 534.

Giving this statement I must add that in spite of clear and incontestable evidence given by documents mentioned here I have not been satisfied with this examination alone. As far as it was possible for me, I have tried to enlarge the bulk of evidence and to subject Philoxenus' other writings to examination in order to find out the extent of the evidence. So I have examined the remains of his Commentaries on the Gospels of Matthew and Luke in a MS Br. Mus. Add. 17.126 and a section from the Commentary of Matthew preserved in MS Br. Mus. Add. 14.649 as well as that of the Commentary of Luke in MS Br. Mus. Add. 17.267. Unfortunately, the last pieces are small and contain only few quotations, but fragmentary as these remains are, they suffice to give evidence. Some quotations from the Synoptics are to be found in his Commentary on John preserved in a MS Br. Mus. Add. 14.534 written in a fine regular Estrangelo and belonging to the first quarter of the 6th century.

Besides these documents I have examined some of his letters preserved in the MS Br. Mus. Add. 14.726 and Add. 14.649 and finally his treatise addressed to one of his disciples on the renunciation of the world, preserved in a MS of 12th or 13th century Br. Mus. Add. 14.728.

An examination of all this material furnishes us with a new important accession to the same textual phenomenon. Indeed, every document mentioned here brings clear testimony and shows how deep the influence of the Old Syriac text traditions was upon this illustrious author. Provisionally, we have to content ourselves here with this general statement in calling attention to the fact that careful investigation casts an entirely new light upon the character of his Gospel text. Philoxenus' relations with the Old Syriac Gospel traditions are very important and are worthy of being treated separately. The fruits of such a study will contribute to our knowledge about the Old Syriac version.

2. Jacob of Serûg.

The man who comes on the scene in the year 502/503 as a suffragan has survived to Syrian posterity as "the flute of the Holy Ghost" and "the harp of the Orthodox Church". It seems that his pen was more prolific than that of the former author. Of the mass of his literary production — Bar 'Ebrajâ mentions 763 metrical homilies — only a portion has been preserved. Jacob, however, was not only admired for the extent of his literary legacy but also for his stylistic elegance according to such an authority as Jacob of Edessa.

This master received his education in the Theological School of Edessa. Among his biographical data which are very meagre this is a fully proved fact. Jacob himself writes in a letter addressed to the monks of the convent of Mar Bassus that he had studied at Edessa 45

years earlier¹). He apparently wrote this letter prior to his consecration as Bishop of Batnan, which took place in the year 518/519.

As said before, this literary heritage is of a metrical character. Here we scarcely meet with fully cited quotations as in Philoxenus. But, in spite of the modified form due to metrical considerations, the reminiscences do not conceal their provenance. It is not necessary to give samples of the character of these fragments here. Jacob's connections with the Old Syriac Gospel traditions were mentioned by Burkitt; he collected a series of quotations which coincide with the readings given by Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin²). Later some of them were treated by Connolly³). Independent investigations of mine have screened his entire literary legacy and brought new and valuable material to light. Burkitt did not recognize all the Old Syriac quotations, as he was only on the lookout for quotations concurring with Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin. So I have been able to amplify the material testifying to the immense influence of the Old Syriac Gospel text.

We may now sum up our evidence. Whichever way we turn, we cannot overlook the fact that the disciples of the Theological School of Edessa, as far as they are available to us, do not evince any signs of having been influenced by the Peshitta, but give a clear testimony of an unrestricted influence of Old Syriac Gospel-text traditions. I cannot imagine that such learned men as Philoxenus and Jacob, especially Philoxenus who had textual interests, would have adhered to the Old Syriac text traditions unless these had been valid in the Theological centre at Edessa to which these men owed their theological and spiritual education.

1) Der Brief von Jakob von Serugh an die Mönche des Mar Bassus-Klosters, ed. P. Martin. Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft XXX (Leipzig 1876) 224 sq.

2) Evangelion da-Mepharreshe II, 269.

3) Jacob of Serug and the Diatessaron, JTS VIII (Oxford 1907) 581 sqq.

VI. The Rôle of the Peshitta among its Rivals.

Now the time has come to draw our conclusions from the preceding investigation and to begin to utilize the results yielded by a more thorough preparatory work.

As we have seen, for the period under observation there are very few sources which can be utilized. We were forced to use documents, none of which we approached with very high expectations. Then we acquainted ourselves with the early Syrian, Armenian and other Oriental authors whose works alone supply us with the material for this unknown chapter in the history of the text of the New Testament. And now a thorough investigation in the light of patristic evidence has made these our documents speak. Through this operation we have collected some highly valuable material, which provides us with proofs of almost mathematical precision about which Gospel text the author or translator of each of the investigated documents has employed.

And at last true light is thrown upon those dark unexplored regions about which nothing but wrong suppositions existed until now. This opens our eyes and in this light we perceive how the line indicated by our results is exactly the direction of the history of the Peshitta and its rivals. This means a new constellation and means a total shift in the present conceptions of how the Peshitta obtained prevalence, as well as of the further history of the Old Syriac text-traditions.

Now that we begin to see things in their proper light, we may speak of the Peshitta's beginnings among other Gospel traditions rivalling with it in a manner which has historical conformity to the prevailing circumstances. Let us now view these three Gospel types as they take their new places in this new constellation.

1. The Diatessaron

Zahn submitted the opinion that the Diatessaron was the original Gospel of the Syrian Christianity¹⁾. The same standpoint is supported by Burkitt and shared by other scholars. It cannot, however, be regarded as final and definitive. Tatian introduced the Diatessaron in Mesopotamia after the year 172 A. D. But it must be recognized that traces of Christendom reach further back²⁾ and they go to show that in the decades before the arrival of Tatian there must have existed Christian congregations in Osrhoene, although of Jewish-

1) Tatians Diatessaron (Erlangen 1881) 110.

2) Traces of Christendom reach even further back. In Palmyra inscriptions to the memory of Christians dating from the early part of the second century, A. D. 135, are to be found. *Inscriptions sémitiques de Syrie Centrale*, éd. par Melchior de Vogüé (Paris 1868).

Christian taint. Burkitt argues that "the earliest Church in Edessa under Addai and Aggai had no New Testament, for the first generation of Syriac-speaking Christians the Law and the Prophets sufficed." (*Evangelion da-Mepharreshe* II, 212). I think, this view is not very convincing. It is very difficult to imagine the missionary work and the growth of the new congregations without any translated text about the teachings of the new faith. It is worth noticing that usually the Jewish sects had their own scriptures. In fact the traces of this Gospel translation of the most primitive stage of Christianity in Mesopotamia are not entirely missing. Some very valuable clues are to be found in the specific Palestinian Aramaic terms, idioms and grammatical forms preserved by Old Syriac Gospels. These are unknown in pure classical Syriac and constitute an alien element. Certainly Tatian has not made use of them, but these linguistic anomalies together with other remarkable idiosyncrasies and relics of Palestinian provenance tend to prove the existence of an archaic and heterogeneous layer in the Old Syriac Gospels. It seems to be the fact that in a more careful analysis of these elements lies the best hope to go forward here. But seemingly there has taken place only the first and obviously only a partial attempt in translating the Gospel-text into Syriac. At any rate the Diatessaron did not find any such form of the Gospel which would have entered into competition with it and thus it was able to develop into the Bible text of expanding Christendom, to which, it seems, the "apostolos" adapted by Tatian also belonged.

So the peculiarity of Syrian Christendom has become evident also with respect to the Bible text, where it preferred an independent solution of this problem, as well as of other questions connected with Christendom in this milieu, which was as yet inaccessible to Hellenism. It acted according to its own liking in questions of textual tradition and so in its developing stage it became connected with the work of Tatian. Therefore the considerable age of the Diatessaron was to be the moment in ecclesiastic-historical development when the tendency towards sooner or later modifying the Gospel Harmony in favour of the Four Gospels necessarily brought with it a possibility of complication in all attempts at alteration.

But its venerable age was not the sole reason for the great influence of the Diatessaron. Its importance must have also been due to special literary qualities. No other Christian community could claim a Gospel text as its own in which the threads of the narrative were so dexterously interwoven and the text of a similar polish and artistic fineness. The peculiar charm of the Diatessaron must have been an essential factor in guaranteeing such wide popularity to this oldest monument of Christian literature. As far as we know its readings derive from text fragments, the design of which is still unretouched, these

are worthy of admiration. We can repeatedly convince ourselves of the correctness of the summary estimation that 'Abdîshô' bar Berîkhâ, the famous Metropolitan of Nisibis and researcher of literary history, gives of this monument, when he speaks about the Diatessaron as an "admirable Gospel"³).

We already noticed this ourselves in the preceding inquiry. We found the scattered parts of the Diatessaron like bright sherds shining from a great distance and traced them from Georgia to Ethiopia and from Persia to the Low German Gospel texts. This testifies a marvellous power of attraction which cannot be attributed to any other literary document. By observing the influence of the Diatessaron in these distant regions, we can form an idea of its popularity and can only guess what impression it must have made in its concentrated and complete form at a time when it was in constant use.

As such Tatian's work had been used for longer than two centuries and had served the spiritual needs of Syrian Christendom officially in the church as well as privately in circles where the book was in use. For generations the ears of the Syrians had been accustomed to the fall of phrases taken from it. They were repeated at religious services, in the liturgy and sermon, they were learnt by heart, memorized in the congregations of the believers and recited in the monks' cells. The Diatessaron held a similar position in literature and had also assumed scientific authority. In a word, the Gospel in the form of the Diatessaron had penetrated into each of the various aspects of the spiritual life of Syrian Christendom in a most decisive manner.

But notwithstanding all its habitualness and marvellous qualities, these conditions could not prevail for ever. A part of the idiosyncrasies which in Syrian Christendom had once developed independently and of their own free will had to be adapted to Western Christendom. Not that there was an inner necessity for it, but these external tendencies nevertheless demanded consideration. What becomes apparent on textual-historical levels is nothing more than part of a process which reaches much further and tends to adapt its characteristics to the forms of Western Christianity. We shall refer to these tendencies later on.

This process, slow at first and hesitatingly seeking contact, soon began to demand access more and more energetically. In the sector of Bible text the first contacts and results already reach back to earlier times. The type of the Four Gospels had originated as a compromise which already embodied the Western form in its outward shape, but contained material in which the original substance was still predomi-

3) *Bibliotheca Orientalis*, III, I, 325 sqq.

nant. A suitable atmosphere for such reactions must presumably be sought for in those places where the Greek element in the form of the Greek diaspora had come into contact with Syrian Christianity; such possibilities presented themselves not only in the West but also in the Orient⁴). We have already met with examples of Greek influence attacking the text of the Diatessaron itself in certain places. But all this is only preparatory, and perhaps in the last part of the fourth century the development had taken such a turn that more radical changes appeared to be inevitable. The form of the Gospel Harmony had no prospect of preserving its future existence from the moment when this process took the road which began in the patriarch's pulpit and led over bishops to the ranks of the clergy in the action of suspending the Diatessaron. We cannot ascertain when the first orders against the Diatessaron were issued. But we can take it for granted that Rabbula was not the initiator of this action at Edessa. The detailed report written by his Syriac biographer reveals no knowledge of any reform. This complete silence and ignorance is very significant here.

Thanks to the canons which Rabbula distributed to his clergy, we are familiar with the events in Edessa in this phase of the process. On the basis of all that we can infer from the documents⁵) the

4) Greek congregations also existed in Persia, where they had come into existence through the deportation policy of Persian rulers. The military expeditions of Sapor II (308—379) to the West brought thousands of Christians to Persia. In the story of Mar Saba we read: "and they built a village and decorated in it the holy church." *Acta martyrum et sanctorum*, ed. Bedjan, IV, 225. This was repeated in other places and times and they were able to found separate colonies with their own sacral edifices. We know, however, that these deportees found Greek congregations dating from even earlier times. The Nestorian chronicle reports how in the year 252 Sapor I was victorious in the war against Valerian and brought multitudes of prisoners with their bishops and priests to Persia. Here they built churches and gave worship in Greek as well as in Syriac. The Chronicle then reads: "The Christians spread over the whole country and multiplied in the Orient. And they built in Ranshahr (= Rev-Ardeshir) which is the residence of the Persian bishops, two churches, and one was called the church of the Romans and the other Karmanum, and the service of God was in them in Greek and Syriac." *Histoire Nestorienne inédite*, éd. par A. Scher, PO IV (Paris 1907) 222.

Such was the situation when two dioceses were intermingled, as they coincided geographically. There is a trace about this in acts of the older synods. I. Guidi noticed that one diocese was represented by two bishops. *Ostsyrische Bischöfe und Bischofssitze im V., VI. und VII. Jahrhundert*. ZDMG XLIII (Leipzig 1889) 407. Guidi considered incorrect readings to be an explanation for this, but it is by no means the only explanation, as it is thoroughly comprehensible from a historic point of view as well.

5) *Opera selecta* 220.

question of the displacement of the Diatessaron could not have been acute at his time. The wording of his canon: "let the presbyters and diacons take care that in all churches there should be the Evangelion da-Mepharreshe and it be read", is so general that no reformer could have been satisfied with such a formula. Further, in regard to convents Rabbula has the opportunity to mention books but there is no word of the Diatessaron⁶⁾. If Rabbula had initiated the reform, a bishop of his energetic disposition would hardly have omitted to make explicit and strong orders. In this respect we are sufficiently acquainted with his personality. We see in other canons how little he shrank from employing reprisals of an extremely severe character and of doubtful value, when he carried out his prescriptions. This our result fits in with biographer's report that Rabbula translated the New Testament from Greek because of the variations of readings⁷⁾. If means Rabbula was particularly disturbed by the diversity of variants but not by the existence of the Diatessaron.

We have good information about how stricter countermeasures later proved necessary in order to definitely supplant the Diatessaron and also to exclude it from private use. Here the report of Theodoretos, bishop of Cyrrhos (420—450), a younger colleague of Rabbula in the West, is important in this connection. It is a wellknown story but worthy of being repeated. Theodoretos tells of how the believers have innocently continued to use the book as a handy compendium. He then took action in his congregations and as a result found more than two hundred such books in use of the churches. He collected and destroyed them and substituted them by the Four Gospel types⁸⁾.

This report about the Cyrrhestica is highly instructive: in the mainly Syriac-speaking population of 800 villages⁹⁾ the Diatessaron was used only by a small minority while the great majority employed the four Gospel type. It should be noted that these glimpses reveal the conditions of a backward diocese described so by Theodoretos himself.

This report of Theodoretos' proves this action to have been the final and radical step which needs must have made the Diatessaron something of a literary rarity in this diocese.

On the other hand, we must beware of generalizing this situation. There are good reasons for supposing that at the same time as in a diocese situated quite a long way west of Edessa, where Greek and Syrian elements were in close contact and consequently the whole situation was more strained and severer measures were employed, farther East, in districts with purely Syrian congregations, the situation was

6) *ibid.* 210 sq.

7) *ibid.* 172.

8) *Haereticarum fabularum compendium*, Migne PG LXXXIII col. 372 A.

9) Zahn, *Diatessaron* 37.

nevertheless very different. Here there was no incentive to persecute the Diatessaron so ruthlessly, and it may have found shelter in these parts for perhaps even a longer space of time. Especially monastic and ascetic circles might come into consideration as suitable hiding-places to which everything archaic gladly retreated to enjoy asylum rights which were willingly granted.

2. The Vetus Syra of the Gospels.

Burkitt was of opinion that "The Diatessaron was the only serious rival that the Peshitta had to face at the time of its publication" ¹⁾. He conceived this idea from a notion expressed in the apodictic statement: "but the Patristic evidence does not suggest that the version to which the Sinai Palimpsest and Cureton's MS belong enjoyed a wide circulation in the Church during the fourth and fifth centuries" ²⁾.

The actual situation is totally different. Vetus Syra was the real potentate the only rival, the Peshitta, had encountered and one which had hindered it from stepping into the shoes of the Gospel Harmony. Now we have facts before us which testify this.

Firstly, Bishop Rabbula, who continued to supplant the Diatessaron, used a Gospel text which is the Vetus Syra. We know too that he possessed and used this text during the last years of his life ³⁾. Thus the fact of Vetus Syra having had the predominant ecclesiastical position in Mesopotamia at Edessa is of historical importance. It is impossible to imagine that the Peshitta could have been in use everywhere else in the diocese of Edessa, but in the bishop's principal residence the Vetus Syra! On the contrary, the fact that the official Gospel-text in Edessa was the Vetus Syra must have been the decisive moment in the process of supplanting the Diatessaron and substituting it by the Evangelion da-Mepharreshe. Considering all the points ascertained, the Evangelion da-Mepharreshe cannot have been anything else but a type of the Vetus Syra. The bishop's example was not without consequence in these questions, whether it was followed spontaneously in textual questions or whether it had to go the official way with the priests' assistance. And at last we cannot entirely neglect the rôle of the leadership of Edessa in the religious domain. As a city with an especial prestige, favoured by the Lord himself — the story

1) Early Eastern Christianity 64.

2) *ibid.* 65.

3) see my Investigations 34 sqq.

of the King Abgar was accepted as trustworthy in the belief of the Syrian Christians — Edessa enjoyed authority as we learn from the oldest Syriac documents.

Of course it is not out of the question that after the supplanting of the Diatessaron the Peshitta may have taken its place here and there among the copies of the Evangelion da-Mepharreshe too. But the text which played a decisive part in displacing the Diatessaron was the *Vetus Syra*. Just as it had carried this task through and taken the Diatessaron's place in Edessa, certainly already before Rabbula's inthronisation, it must have done so elsewhere in the churches of Osrhoene.

We cannot ascertain anything more about the use of the *Vetus Syra* text form by Rabbula's successors. His immediate successor was Hîbâ, well-known for his literary activities of which his nickname "The Translator" bears evidence. But there are neither samples of his translating ability extant nor have any of his original works been preserved⁴⁾.

But if we cannot proceed any further in this direction, we have at least prepared the way and reached the circles in the bishop's vicinity. We have also succeeded in proving that *Vetus Syra* was used in later times too, and this not only once but repeatedly. After the death of Rabbula, the *Vetus Syra* was used by circles in which the memory of Rabbula had been preserved. It is among these circles that we must seek the authors of the second Syriac biography and the Syriac translation of a letter sent to the Bishop Gamellinos. The biography which is not extant in its original language but has been partly preserved in a Greek translation through the *Vita* of Alexander Akoimetos having been interpolated with it is of particular importance⁵⁾. The history of Paul originated from these circles is very important, too⁶⁾.

And the course of our research has once more led us to the same circles by means of another document: the acts of the Synod of Ephesus. These acts clearly indicate that the surroundings in which they assumed the Syriac instead of the Greek form must have belonged to the sphere of influence of the *Vetus Syra*⁷⁾. This is yet another proof of there having been no change in the position of the *Vetus Syra* in the meantime.

There is the possibility of making still further inroads into the textual sphere of the Mesopotamian metropolis from another point of access. The observations on the textual customs and idiosyncrasies

4) Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur* 101.

5) cf. pag. 13 sqq.

6) cf. pag. 25.

7) cf. pag. 27 sqq.

of the disciples who had completed their studies at the Theological School of Edessa are very profitable. They give us a clear testimony about the unrestricted influence of the Old Syriac Gospel even some decades later ⁸⁾).

As far as the documents which can be utilized open up the horizon for us, they leave a clear impression. Wherever we look, we come across phenomena and indications pointing towards the text-type of the *Vetus Syra*. We have to deal not only with a situation, where seven of eight investigated documents fall to the share of the *Vetus Syra*. More than that, for we must not forget that these seven come from more or less authoritative circles. Thus it has been made clear that as far as we are able to ascertain it at all, the *Vetus Syra* was the text which played the leading part.

This result of ours is as astonishing as it is important. This statement, made by producing the testimony of the sources themselves, gives the existing history of the text of the Syriac New Testament its first secure footing which at the same time cannot be altered by future research and must remain a definitely proved fact which will not lose its determining importance for textual-historical problems on Syrian ground.

This new perception makes us inquire after the reasons for a development of this kind. Here we must approach questions in connection with the text reform which Burkitt passed over too lightly, without giving them any attention whatever. But the opinion is by no means justified that the text reform had had no importance among Syrian Christians, when we see everywhere else how old habits and traditions have endeared themselves and are most difficult to root out.

Already a priori I cannot think of anything more natural than the course of events in which the *Diatessaron* was followed by the *Vetus Syra*.

We know very well how the accustomed Bible text had endeared itself to the congregation. We have already spoken of the points which must be taken into consideration if we wish to comprehend how the readings and variants especially of the *Diatessaron* became deeply rooted in Syrian Christendom, and how they penetrated the whole liturgy, oral tradition and literature: the Syrians had been accustomed to hear, write and read thus, and this had become a habit.

And if the ecclesiastical development now gathered its unavoidable requirements from other sources and demanded the substitution of the harmonized Gospel form by the Four Gospel type, it cannot be easily imagined that the text which would now have had prospects to

8) cf. pag. 43 sqq.

take its place could have been the Peshitta. Here an observation must be recalled which seems to repeat itself everywhere and to have become a rule in religious history, namely that reforms of such extent cannot be carried through so easily.

It is instructive to recall here an analogous reform and the resistance provoked by it with regard to the Vulgate. If we read the introductions written by Hieronymus for the various books, we can guess from his words into what a whirlwind he sent his translation. In one case, however, we can perceive even more clearly what kind of opposition he met with. Namely in Africa. Augustinus, who also had doubts respecting the Vulgate, and dreaded difficulties from the point of view of spiritual care, relates a characteristic episode in a letter. A riot broke out in an African congregation when the bishop had the book of Jonah read in the church in Hieronymus' translation in which 4,6 instead of "cucurbita", as the congregation and the Christians had been wont to hear until then, they heard "hedera". For the sake of peace, the bishop could not but have the lection revised later in accordance with the old customary text⁹).

In modern times also we have been able to notice how the traditional Bible text has taken root, for which reason no radical changes can be effected overnight but every attempt of this kind must be made with the greatest caution and carried through step by step.

In my opinion this point is very weighty and we cannot simply leave it unobserved, also with respect to the text reform of the Syriac Bible. The points which have arisen from this aspect as unfavourable for the Peshitta have been, however, completely overlooked, as well as on the other hand the superiorities which the *Vetus Syra* must have displayed in this reform have not been considered. The difficulties with which the Peshitta is beset will be dealt with separately; here we want to touch on the priority of the *Vetus Syra*.

For various reasons precisely the *Vetus Syra* must have been the medium for which Syrian Christendom was searching when the reform of the Bible text brought disquietude into hitherto prevailing habits.

Firstly the *Vetus Syra* undeniably had the advantage of possessing old and familiar text material. That the extant text-versions of the *Vetus Syra* originated later than the *Diatessaron* and from its text

9) Nam quidam frater noster episcopus cum lectitari instituisset in ecclesia, cui praeest, interpretationem tuam, movit quiddam longe aliter ab te positum apud Jonam prophetam (Jonae IV, 6), quam erat omnium sensibus memoriaeque inveteratum et tot aetatum successionibus decantatum. Factus est tantus tumultus in plebe maxime graecis arguentibus et inclamantibus calumniam falsitatis, ut cogeretur episcopus (Oëa quippe civitas erat) Judaeorum testimonium flagitare. Epistula LXXI. Migne, PL XXXIII, col. 242 sq.

material, is not a commonly accepted view, — but it is a fact which has been proved by Vogels¹⁰). It does not need to be proved a second time. For a long time I have also been investigating them independently from the aspect of their being variants of the Diatessaron and thereby again convinced myself that these versions are full of readings from the Diatessaron. These are the elements which were destined to be of boundless importance for the future of the *Vetus Syra*. Thus it can be said — *mutatis mutandis* — that the representatives of the *Vetus Syra* constitute a synthesis, in which old text-material after the pattern of the Diatessaron has been poured into the form of the Four Gospels which latter suited the demands of the time.

Secondly, another observation can be made which from another point of view elucidates the suitability of the *Vetus Syra* for replacing the Diatessaron. The flexibility and elasticity of this text-form made it especially suitable. This can be proved in more ways than one. We frequently find that the *Syr-Cur* has a more archaic version than the *Syr-Sin*, and vice versa. This proves that here it cannot be a question of mutual dependence, but of independent text traditions in which each text has lived, as it were, a life of its own. What both these texts have in common appears to incline towards the text pattern of the Diatessaron, but variations, too, have a free scope of activity. We reach the same conclusion if we do not limit ourselves to *Syr-Cur* and *Syr-Sin* but penetrate deeper.

We have gradually come to the conclusion that there must have been various *Vetus Syra* texts. Single examples are actually within our reach. Peters found old Syriac texts in the Syriac translation of the Theophany of Eusebius¹¹). I chanced to find new material in the Persian Acts of the Martyrs, known as the "Collection of Marutha", the first book of which contains very valuable material¹²). But this is not all. What has been found in this branch I hope to present in a separate research which I have completed. We shall be able to ascertain further how great a number of the texts of *Vetus Syra* there may have been. In reality here we have to deal with something which is far more than a literary curiosity.

But on closer investigation of these texts, the remarkable fact that they differed from each other presents itself. We have already repeatedly met with such cases in the course of our research where from one side or the other *Syr-Cur* and *Syr-Sin* cast their shadows.

10) H. J. Vogels, *Die altsyrischen Evangelien in ihrem Verhältnis zu Tatians Diatessaron* (Freiburg 1911).

11) *Die Zitate aus dem Matthäus-Evangelium in der syrischen Übersetzung der Theophanie des Eusebius*. OC 3 Serie XI (Leipzig 1936) 1 sqq.

12) *Die Evangelienzitate in der Einleitung in die syrischen Märtyrerakten*,

And when we did not let ourselves be disturbed by them and tried to find a path forward we made discoveries on which Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin keep silence. We have thus avoided the methodical mistake which Peters made in accepting Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin as the sum total of Vetus Syra traditions and judging the whole Vetus Syra group by them¹³).

So the conviction which the investigator in text-historical regions must conform to is that the form presented by the Vetus Syra is by no means a homogeneous and uniform text. The Vetus Syra contained more than was conceivable after our first meeting with its two extant representatives. If we force our way behind Syr-Cur and Syr-Sin, we learn to see what it contained.

The number of differing texts of the Vetus Syra can easily amount to that estimated by Hieronymus regarding the variety of those of the Vetus Latina. And thus in the tradition of the old Syriac Gospel-text we see, as it were, a huge tree whose boughs are represented by two texts which however do not enable us to know the entire tree.

At the same time the Vetus Syra displays, when viewed from a certain aspect, its suitability for taking the place of the Diatessaron. The requirements of the congregation in the West about which Hieronymus writes: *scribunt non quod inveniunt, sed quod intelligunt*¹⁴), were similar to those of Syrian congregations. The Syriac biography affords a direct proof of this. But they could only be met by the Vetus Syra. Thanks to its old text material, it possessed sufficient elasticity to be able to adapt itself to the demands of the congregation, to their customs, and find room for these special readings in its text.

Therefore, when Syrian Christendom was faced with the necessity of a text reform, its reaction cannot have been other than that the Syrians grasped at the Old Syriac Gospel type with both hands. What had to be relinquished by taking over this text form was the outward shape of the previous one, there being no prospect whatever of retaining it any longer. But this concession was a minimal one and did not play any considerable part in the liturgy, literature or oral tradition. There was much to be won by it, however, — very much. This concession offered the possibility of remaining faithful to their accustomed text traditions. And Vetus Syra was excellent in this respect.

Besides, no demand whatever had been made that the Four Gospel type replacing the Diatessaron should be that of the Peshitta! As far as we know, solely the form is discussed. It is improbable that the Syrian Christian community would have been willing to concede of its own accord more than was required of it.

13) Der Text der soghdischen Evangelienbruchstücke und das Problem der Peschitta. OC 3 Serie XI (Leipzig 1936) 153 sqq.

14) Epistula LXX, 5. Migne, PL XXII, col. 671.

In these circumstances there is no doubt that immediately after the beginning of the text-reform the churches and congregations in the lands of the Euphrates and the Tigris have preferred the Evangelion da-Mepharreshe, i. e. the Old-Syriac Gospels. Moreover, it was not an unknown form, for certainly it was in use earlier. Aphrahat is a prominent witness here.

It is difficult to state the time when the first official instruction went out to supplant the Diatessaron — perhaps in the last decades of the fourth century, may be earlier. We must confess that we do not know this. As far as we find evidence, we are entitled to judge that the Syrian Christians and congregations were in no hurry to follow these instructions. They preferred to await new arrangements from time to time. And the Church authorities had patience enough to do this. We learn that there was great freedom in Syrian Christianity in the matter of the Gospel form as long as the archaic text traditions were not injured. This circumstance favoured the using of the Old-Syriac Gospels and the Diatessaron simultaneously in the Eastern dioceses for a long time after the first official issue.

Our conclusions about the dominant part of the text type of the *Vetus Syra* have given us occasion to look into an unknown chapter of the Bible text reform. Light is also thrown upon this chapter and we at least learn that the Syrians did not consider the Bible text reform to be an indifferent question, for their devotedness to their beloved text manifests itself in the choice of a Gospel text capable of maintaining their ancient customs, whereby they were enabled to carry the reform through without trouble or complications.

3. The Peshitta.

All these observations have afforded a wider perspective with regard to the part allotted to the Peshitta at the beginning and in the middle of the fifth century. There are no further obstacles to seeing the position actually held by the Peshitta among other versions.

As far as we have had the possibility of testing documental material, we have come to the conviction that the Peshitta only succeeded in drawing one of the eight documents investigated into the orbit of its influence. This proves the secondary importance of the Peshitta. In its beginnings the Peshitta must have contented itself with a very modest rôle beside other versions and in the middle of the fifth century it had not made much further progress. This statement of ours brings about a complete change in ideas, and with respect to research makes the view hitherto accepted as a dogma itself a problem

which must first be investigated before we can venture to draw any conclusions about the Peshitta. This radical change is due to the evidence of the sources, which future research can only deepen and enlarge upon but not alter.

The position of the Peshitta which at first seems astounding soon ceases to be so and even appears quite natural after penetrating closer into this problem and analysing it.

We must first attain clarity about the character of the Peshitta, so as to be able to form a basis for analysing it.

The Peshitta was one of the numerous manuscripts of the *Vetus Syra*, the text of which was made the basis of redaction and adaptation to the vulgar Greek text valid in the patriarchate of Antiochia. The result of this revision was that digressions were eliminated, additions removed, omissions supplemented, and peculiarities retouched. Here we see the same process as that effected by the Bethlehem monk with a *Vetus Latina* text, which thus became the *Vulgate*. Through the revision the Peshitta lost its former singularity, the differences and variants so deeply rooted in Syrian traditions, and with these a vast amount of its particular wealth of text tradition. For this reason the text has assumed a wholly new aspect, conforming more or less to the Greek original. I say "more or less" for the sake of exactness, as the extant rudiments are so irrelevant and incapable of making a clear impression that they do not further influence the position. This is the basic point which characterizes the Peshitta and distinguishes it from Old Syriac text forms.

Peters, however, tried to stress the fact of the Peshitta nevertheless being a *Vetus Syra*¹⁾. And so it is from a certain point of view. It is true too that it is possible to find elements of the *Diatessaron* in the Peshitta which are not preserved in the extant *Vetus Syra* manuscripts. These however are minutiae which may be of great scientific importance but are quite insufficient for characterizing the text. We need not renounce our conception for their sake. We also find variants from the *Vulgate* which are remains of the *Vetus Latina* and diverge from the Greek text, elements which escaped the eye of Hieronymus, but the *Vulgate* will remain the *Vulgate* and the *Vetus Latina* the *Vetus Latina* for all that. Similarly, the character of the Peshitta clearly distinguishes it from the *Vetus Syra* and produces an independent text type, which fact cannot be refuted by other observations. While the Peshitta's back is turned on the ancient and endeared Syrian traditions, its face is decidedly turned towards the Greek form. To

1) Der Text der soghdischen Evangelienbruchstücke und das Problem der Peschitta 161.

Syrian Christians it must have appeared to be a new text-type of a foreign design ²). And we are interested in what the Syrians must have thought about it themselves.

Apart from its Greek design, the Peshitta has other characteristic features: the constancy and rigidity of its text.

Gwilliam has rendered us a great service by his investigations on the tradition of the Peshitta texts, working through 42 manuscripts of different periods, the oldest of which date from the fifth century ³). The results attained by his critical apparatus confront us with the most astonishing fact that the new edition of the Peshitta does not mentionably differ from that of the days of Widmanstadt and Schaaf. This is due to the very surprising fact that the number of variants, and instabilities in the Peshitta was exceedingly small. What this means becomes clearer when we notice that there are far greater variations in the manuscript tradition of the Vulgate, not to mention such mixtures of combined texts as Codex Corbeiensis I (X saec.), Codex Rehdigeranus (VII saec.), Codex Sangermanensis II (X saec.) a. o. And what we find in Gwilliam's register dwindles if we discount orthographical mistakes, grammatical divergences and other irrelevant material. What remains is little enough. This enables us to see a remarkable quality of the Peshitta: the constancy of its text. It preserved it with great care, and copyists have paid attention to it. So the constancy of the text is as conspicuous a feature of its physiognomy as its clear-cut Greek profile.

Only a short time ago Peters tried to demonstrate the contrary, namely that the Peshitta has no constant value whatever but has been modified by special readings and variants, which circumstance once more proclaims its *Vetus Syra* character⁴). As already mentioned, the road by which Peters reaches this conclusion is not free of reproach

2) Analogical observations can be made in earlier periods. Ephrem estimates the Diatessaron as the Gospel, but the "Separated Gospel" appeared to him to be a "Greek Gospel". *Prose Refutations of Mani, Marcion and Bardaisan*, ed. Mitchell I, 121 sq.

3) *Tetraevangelium sanctum juxta simplicem syrorum versionem*, ed. P. E. Pusey et G. H. Gwilliam (Oxonii 1901) IX sqq.

4) „Die angeführten Beispiele dürften ausreichen, um zu zeigen, daß die Pesch-Varianten, die uns der soghdische Text mit Sicherheit erkennen läßt, keineswegs bedeutungslos sind. Es handelt sich nicht um Quisquilien, sondern um Dinge, die in den kritischen Apparat einer zukünftigen kritischen Pesch-Ausgabe aufzunehmen wären. Sie zeigt uns einerseits, daß die Pesch der Evangelien keineswegs eine starre, einheitliche Größe ist. Andererseits wird die eingangs dargelegte These von dem noch vielfach greifbar werdenden Charakter der Pesch als einer *Vetus Syra* Zeugin gerade durch die vorgelegten Varianten aufs neue bestätigt.“ *Der Text der soghdischen Evangelienbruchstücke und das Problem der Peschitta* 161.

from a methodical point of view. The variations of the Peshitta cannot be demonstrated in this manner. Peters has, however, raised a question which has sound footing. I share the opinion that the Peshitta must have contained more variants than is shown by Gwilliam's apparatus. This, however, still has to be ascertained, but it must be done in a methodologically correct manner. Then the results will be different, and what is most important, the Peshitta will remain the Peshitta. This task is a *cura posterior*, but so much can be predicted here that even if we do widen our knowledge about these matters, the facts which Gwilliam has demonstrated by means of the documents cannot be ignored or completely disregarded. It remains a noteworthy phenomenon when 42 MSS run side by side, and occasional digressions regarding the constant fundamental character of the text are to be found in the periphery.

The features that we have hitherto noticed in the Peshitta place it in total opposition to the *Vetus Syra* text-forms. There the Syrian archaic text with ancient material and elasticity, here the new Greek form with its rigidity. There homelike and spacious, here strange and narrow, — such perhaps must have been the attitude of Syrian Christians in estimating both these texts.

This perception is of vast importance. A dark shadow must have already cast itself upon Peshitta's prospects of profiting from the Bible-text reform. It must have seemed to the Syrians as if it were of foreign origin, this naturally evoking mistrust and opposition.

But this analysis makes things still clearer to us, if we persevere in it and try to apply it to the background of the development of Syrian mental life.

The foreign and unfamiliar text-form that presented itself in the shape of the Peshitta was by no means an isolated event in the mental development of that period. In reality the Bible-text reform belongs to a far wider spiritual movement. This is a process which moves simultaneously with the orientalization of the Occident, but in the opposite direction, from the west towards the Orient. This grandiose wave is Christian Hellenism, which furthers in manifold differentiated sectors the tendency to adapt the Christian forms found in the Orient to the Greek spirit. In the whole history of Syrian spiritual life no other event is so clearly reflected in Syriac sources and is so visible and traceable step by step as the movement of this wave of Christian Hellenism with its groping search for contact in order to prepare itself for the coming struggle.

It is most instructive to follow this process, if we wish to comprehend basic events and occurrences in the history of Syrian Christendom.

Various aspects can be chosen. Let us first cast a glance at the section of dogmatic history. At the time when Hellenism had not yet expanded as far as Mesopotamia, forms had originated independently in the local Christendom the character of which appears very peculiar to an eye accustomed to western conditions. The Syrians also displayed their independence by determining the difference between what is orthodox and what heretical. Measured by western standards, this was a retort in which manifold heresies held a dominant position. The influences of Christian Hellenism which had penetrated thus far were incapable of creating more than an irrelevant cell whose future was only ensured by its readiness to fight for its right of existence in a long and desperate struggle. What immense opposition was active in these heretical groups we learn from Ephrem of Edessa, who was full of wrath about the domination of the heretics there, which caused the orthodox ecclesiastical circle to be suppressed to the level of a sect, named after their leader Palut, whereas the heretics at that time generally went by the name of Christians⁵). And this was the case not only in Edessa, but also in other parts⁶). Conditions changed very slowly. And when in the first decades of the fifth century during Rabbula's rule the views of the orthodox group were almost victorious, he had to exercise severe measures against his adversaries, measures, however, of doubtful value, in order to win the position and fortify the basis of orthodoxy⁷). The heretical groups must have still had a very great part to play, if such fierce struggles for the victory of orthodoxy as are made manifest by Rabbula's biography were inevitable. But by what tenacity and what violent strife the supremacy of Christian Hellenism was achieved becomes clear when we recall that from the time when the cell of orthodoxy headed by Palut had begun to evince noticeable activity already more than two hundred years had passed!

Very interesting observations on the history of asceticism can be made when we try to follow the activities of Christian Hellenism from this aspect.

In the early stages of Christendom in these regions, Mesopotamia was a hotbed where the most radical movements were fighting for supremacy and thus preparing the ground for the evolution of ascetic

5) *Adversus haereses sermones* XXII. *Opera omnia* ed. Mobarrek, *Syriace* II, 485.

6) Marutha complains even at the beginning of the fifth century that orthodoxy is like a single stalk of wheat in a field full of weeds. *Studia syriaca*, ed. I. Ephraem II Rahmani, IV (Scharfensi 1909) 98 sq.

7) "and thousands of Jews and myriads of heretics he baptized in Christ during all the years of his episcopate". *Opera selecta* 191 sqq. cf. pag. 193.

views and forms suited to the peculiar taste and passionate character of the Syrians⁸). What had originated here had come about without the influence of Christian Hellenism.

The hellenizing process of Christendom now reached out its arms towards this sector also, in order to propagate the ideas of Greek spiritual authorities directed against mortification and emphasizing the ethical sides of asceticism, and it is interesting to follow the conflicts which were unavoidable in these touching-points of two different worlds⁹). Here Christian Hellenism collided with a conception which was especially pertinacious in its resistance and actually never surrendered. Mortification remained an essential characteristic of Syrian asceticism, and not until monachism together with Syrian Christendom had been exterminated could this resistance be overcome.

Monachism, a very important movement¹⁰), displayed similar stubborn resistance against Basilus' contention that cenobitism was the only ideal ascetic form of life conforming to Christian ethics and refused to relinquish its strict views on the priority of anchoritism¹¹). For centuries its influence was so strong that cenobitic life was merely conceded the value of serving as a preparatory stage to anchoritism. Cenobitic life never succeeded in attaining independent importance.

The pattern of cenobitic life with its economy and arrangements was set by Pachomios in Egypt and spread quickly everywhere. The Syrians visited convents where they got an insight into cenobitic life, but this did not increase their willingness to retreat from their radical positions founded upon a contemplative life without work and in poverty¹²). Movements which launched actions of protest against infiltrating influences derived new impetus from here. We even find requirements in orders issued by Rabbula to the monks which made the economy and fully developed communal life of a monastery impos-

8) cf. my *Les messalliens et les réformes de Barçaumā de Nisibe dans l'église perse*, CBU 37 (Pinneberg 1947) 4 sqq.

9) There are most interesting episodes in *Historia religiosa* of Theodoretos. Meletius, bishop of Antiochia, tries to make it clear to the ascetic Simeon how iron chains on one's body are useless and that mentality and mental chains suffice. Migne, PG LXXXIII col. 1472 B. Another bishop of Antiochia, Theodotus, orders the ascetic Baradatos to come out of the chest which he had made for mortifying his body. *ibid.* col. 1485 C.

10) See the remarks in my *Einiges über die karitative Tätigkeit im syrischen Mönchtum*, CBU 51 (Pinneberg 1947).

11) cf. my *A Letter of Ephrem to the Mountaineers. A literary critical contribution to Syriac patristic literature*, CBU 25 (Pinneberg 1947) 7 sqq.

12) *Les messalliens et les réformes de Barçaumā* 5 sqq.

sible¹³). This was a hundred years after Pachomios had founded the monasteries, these having spread and become popular over the entire Christian world.

But in those parts, too, where the situation was different and Hellenism had succeeded in breaking into their positions the Syrians did not surrender so easily everywhere. The tenacity of their resistance had not yet been broken. After the victory of orthodoxy the heretical groups continued their work of undermining the foundations of the Church for centuries. Although in the second and third decade of the fifth century the cenobitic form of life made progress, there was a simultaneous action, assembling and calling up all the resistant forces for their final struggle¹⁴).

We have gained an insight into some chapters of a grandiose struggle which help us to see how the Syrians reacted against the foreign influences which Christian Hellenism brought with it. The Syrians did not accept them gladly and evinced no willingness to renounce their originality. Their reaction manifested itself in extremely tenacious resistance, and it was therefore impossible for Hellenism to achieve its ends quickly, as the course of this process of evolution was very slow and tardy. If we follow this struggle in other sections, such as the history of dogmatic conceptions, canonical and ecclesiastical discipline, philosophy, etc., we see that the Syrians adopted the same attitude everywhere.

Such observations in the shape of principles crystallized out of Syrian spiritual history earnestly compel us to take into account a similar resistance against the Bible-text reform which is nothing less than one of the many aspects of the process of the Hellenisation. It would be very unnatural and almost incomprehensible to us if the reaction against the text reform had been different. The idea that the reform had hardly begun when the Peshitta had already gained a decisive victory would be an utter contradiction of our conception and knowledge of Syrian mental life! But on the other hand it is quite natural and in conformity with the whole frame of things that the reaction was of a kind to put the patience of the Peshitta to a hard test.

These deductions from the general development as well as from the internal tenets of Syrian ecclesiastical and mental history are, however, not only the result of logical syllogisms but are based on exact proof. As we have seen these results are in accordance with the Syriac

13) Opera selecta 212, 4—7 prohibits herds of sheep and goats, horses, mules, and other animals. One donkey or ox is permitted for tilling the soil. 212, 8—11 prohibits purchase and sale.

14) A Letter of Ephrem to the Mountaineers 11 sqq.

literary monuments previously investigated, which provide ultimate evidence about the circulation of the Peshitta during the decades after Rabbula's episcopacy.

But in spite of the fact that the congregations apparently had little desire for the Peshitta, it has found its adherents elsewhere. It is natural that they came from circles which revealed an understanding of the textual conformity to the original writings of the Christian faith. So the theological development in Orient may supply some clues to a better understanding of the beginnings of the Peshitta. Doubtless the theological centre of scientific Biblical exegesis at Antioch has given an important impulse to rouse the interest towards problems of this kind. In the 4th century there was a great number of exegetes whose work was initiated by Diodor, the illustrious teacher and famous ascete. Their great reputation must have also attracted the theological students from the Eastern dioceses to Antioch, for in this bilingual centre Greek and Syriac were used. Certainly these pupils inspired by the scientific method of Biblical exegesis obtained another concept of the revised Bible text. Upon going back to their countries they brought the new ideas with them and tried to rouse an appreciation in the congregations. We have good reasons to think that the impulses such as these must have caused some hesitation about accepting the Old Syriac text-traditions as authoritative. (Similar observations as to the influence of Greek-Syriac studies can be made at another centre of Greek and Syriac philological studies and at a later date, namely at the monastery Qenneshrê.) But we must keep in mind that this could have been only an attempt characterised as "academic" and therefore its extent strongly limited by the powerful and deeprooted customs of the congregations and clergy in the lands of the Euphrates and the Tigris.

Thus we begin to see the Peshitta in its light. It assumes realistic features. It, too, is given no preference to the Vulgate. Its beginnings were equally modest and it had hard battles before it. This bishop on the most important seat in the metropolis of Mesopotamia who carried the Bible text reform into effect did not help it to acquire prevalence. Bishop Rabbula who continued the reform did not also introduce it. It is not probable that his successor did either. There are at any rate no guarantees of the fact. It is also uncertain whether Rabbula's second successor even succeeded in so doing. This is not probable. The hour of the Peshitta had not yet come, and it was reluctant in coming.

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Corrigenda

- pag. 18 line 12 the fourth Syriac word: *men*.
- „ 27 „ 19 the first Syriac word must be completed by a Nûn.
- „ 28 „ 23 the fourth Syriac word must be completed by a Nûn.
- „ 31 „ 35 the third Armenian word: *beranoy*.
- „ 32 „ 10 the fifth Syriac word: *thqûm*.
- „ 34 „ 22 the third Armenian word: *zhogin*.
- „ 40 „ 13 the first Syriac letter must be *sh*.
- „ 41 „ 19 the second Armenian word: *miwsangam*.

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